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John William OF PRINCES

THE

END OF ALL THINGS;

OR,

THE COMING AND KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"GOD IS LOVE;" "OUR HEAVENLY HOME;"
"THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST,"

ETC., ETC.

[James Grant]

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John Williams

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PREFACE.

In bringing before the religious public my third and concluding Volume on the Millennium, I believe I may say that I have dealt more or less fully with every important aspect of the question. At least I am not conscious of having omitted to advert to any point which Millenarians regard as one of the leading features of their system.

It is due alike to myself and to the subject discussed in these three volumes, that I should, in this concluding Volume, explicitly record the fact, that the more I have examined the question, the deeper has become my conviction that it has no scriptural foundation on which to rest.

Millenarianism is based on interpretations of the Word of God, which I hold to be, in the main, fanciful in the highest degree. That these interpretations are not natural, and therefore not in accordance with the meaning of Scripture, is, I maintain, established in the most conclusive manner, by the fact that there is not, as I stated in my first volume, a single authenticated instance of any one ever having embraced Millenarian views on his first becoming acquainted with the Scriptures. The Word of God is so plain on all other points of importance, that he that runneth may read; but in the case of Millenarianism, not one, I believe, has ever been known to adopt its principles without much previous study of the Inspired Volume. No such prolonged process is required in relation to other important questions. The moment a man is converted and taught by the

Spirit, he sees them to be as clear as if they were written in sunbeams.

It is to me most manifest that the theory of the personal reign of Christ on earth is essentially Jewish. Those who have embraced that theory have fallen into the same error, in a sense, as the Jews did previous to the first coming of Christ. They expected the advent of a Messiah, but only as a temporal Prince; the Millenarians, also, expect our Lord to come to our world as a temporal Monarch. It is true, that they blend the spiritual element with an earthly sovereignty in the character of Christ; but still no one who is conversant with their writings can fail to have observed that the earthly element preponderates in their minds in the administration of the affairs of the Millennial kingdom. It would be out of place to go into the proof of this in the few pages usually

allotted to a Preface: but I trust I have made the fact sufficiently clear in the body of the book. It will, I feel assured, be also seen that the Millennial kingdom is to be one in which the Jews are to be socially and politically, as well as religiously, everything, and Christians comparatively nothing. This appears to me demonstrably clear. It is, too, chiefly on passages in the Old Testament Scriptures that Millenarians ground their views as to what the leading characteristics of the Millennial state will be. There is also this further similarity between the Jews of Old Testament times and the Millenarians of the present day,-that as a Messiah came to the Jews, though not the Messiah for whom they looked, the expectations of Millenarians will be realized so far as regards the second coming of Christ. Our Lord will come again,—only it will not be to

set up a Millennial kingdom on earth, but to judge the world, and to receive all his saints to Himself, that where He is, there they may be also.

When Millenarians dwell so much and so emphatically on the assumed fact, that the Jews will be immeasurably greater, and in every respect more favoured, than any other nation on the Millennial earth-will, indeed, in conjunction with Christ their Lord, rule over all the other nations of the world-we need not any longer wonder that all converted Jews, without, so far as I know, a single exception, become Millenarians. They see in Millenarianism all that their forefathers fully expected in relation to their Messiah coming to our world as the King of the Jews. And finding the chief characteristic of the Millennial reign of Christ to be, that He will be a temporal King over all the earth, sitting

in Jerusalem on the throne of David. the system must needs be attractive to them. The Jews, according to Millenarianism, were not, after all, mistaken in their belief that Messiah was to be a temporal Prince. Their only error consisted in expecting a King of their nation, in the worldly sense of the phrase, at the time our Lord appeared. If they had only directed their vision through the vista of the future, till the beginning of the Millennium, they would have found that Millenarians had, in the interval, provided precisely such a temporal Monarch for them as the one for whom they looked and longed. With so many inducements as Millenarians hold out to the seed of Abraham, the wonder is that so few of their number are brought over to Christianity. It must, however, afford some satisfaction to Millenarians, to find that all the Jews who embrace

the religion of Jesus do become zealous supporters of the theory of our Lord's personal reign on earth.

The interval of nearly twelve months which has elapsed since the publication of my first volume has only served to convince me more than ever, that Millenarianism is spreading in all quarters with great and growing rapidity. I hear much surprise expressed at this by those who, like myself, regard the system as altogether unscriptural. My own surprise at the fact of this rapid growth of what I regard as the Millennial delusion, is not so great as that of many other Christians with whom I meet. We have fallen on extraordinary and very eventful times. Men's minds are disturbed by every conceivable kind of religious doubt and error. What could be more surprising than the change, in relation to other questions, which has taken place

in the religious world within the last forty years? We are furnished with an exemplification of this in the extensive progress which Pusevism has made among us. And contemporaneously with this semi-Popish system, originating and fostered in a professedly Protestant establishment, there has sprung up, and widely spread, a system of the opposite kind, known under the name of Broad Churchism,—which is no better than a modified infidelity. It is a curious coincidence that Millenarianism has made equally great progress. In the early part of the century it was hardly known. A very few believed in the personal reign of Christ for a thousand years on earth; but the wild and extravagant views which are now more or less largely mixed up with Millenarianism, were then unknown. Good, however, will come out of this evil; of that I feel assured. It

is my firm conviction that the rashness and extravagance, which have become characteristics of modern Millenarianism, will be the means of its ultimate and not remote extinction. I expressed myself to this effect in the Preface to my first volume; and circumstances have transpired since then which go far to confirm me in the correctness of my belief. I know various instances in which the rashness, the extravagancies, and the presumption of modern Millenarians, have compelled some of the ablest advocates of the personal reign of Christ, to adopt a resolution, while still adhering to their principles, no longer to publish or preach in favour of Millenarianism.

As Millenarianism is making such rapid progress among all evangelical denominations, I would put the question to those who view the subject in the same light as myself, Whether they think they are acting in accordance with the dictates of duty in not adopting measures to arrest its progress? If Millenarianism be regarded as a colossal system of error, it surely behaves those who are ministers of the gospel to avail themselves of the means with which they are furnished by the pulpit, of exposing its true character, and refuting the arguments which are employed in its support. Those who do not minister in holy things. but reject the Millenarian structure as not based on a scriptural foundation. have the Press at their command, as one of those weapons which may be employed against it. If a number of able anti-Millenarians were thus simultaneously and continuously to bring their varied resources to bear against the Millenarian fortress, I feel assured that before long it would be found that it does not

possess the quality of impregnability ascribed to our Gibraltar.

I gave in my first volume a list of the leading Millenarian authors; and additions incidentally made to that list will be found in my second and the present Volume. I would advise such as would like to see what has been written on the same side of the question as that which I have taken, to consult, in addition to those writers I recommended in the Preface to my first volume, the works of Vitingra, Dr. Whitby, Mr. Gipps, Thomas Scott, the commentator, and the Rev. Dr. David Brown. As the works of the first three writers are not accessible to many readers, I would recommend those who wish to see both sides of the question, to read Mr. Elliot's "Horæ Apocalyptice," especially the fourth volume; for there, not only are the leading arguments against Millenarianism given, with a view to their being answered, but the "answers" are so inconclusive, that they will rather repel intelligent readers from Millenarianism, than attract them to it.

The principal points which I have sought to prove, and which I feel satisfied I have proved, are, that if Millenarianism be true, the world is destined to witness two more personal comings of Christ, -one at the commencement of the Millennium, the other at its close. The latter coming will be to judge all mankind, whereas the Scriptures only speak of one more coming of Christ, which is called the second. We are to have two last trumpets, - one to proclaim the coming of Christ Millennially, and afterwards one to announce his coming to judge the world; whereas we only read in the Bible of one last trumpet's sound. We are to have two resurrections of the righteous

-one at the coming of Christ to commence his Millennial reign, and the other of all the saints who have died during the thousand years; whereas we only read in the Word of God of one resurrection of the just. We shall have two terrible universal conflagrations—one at the beginning and the other at the end of the Millennium; whereas the Scriptures only speak of one. We shall also have two new heavens and two new earths—the first at the commencement of the thousand years, and the other at the close; whereas we only read in the Inspired Volume of one creation of new heavens, and one of a new earth. All mankind will not appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, because the whole of the saints alive or in their graves at the time of our Lord's Millennial advent, were glorified in their bodies, and had been with Christ, as his Church during

the whole of the Millennium. If I have succeeded in making out my case on these important points, then Millenarianism has not a resting-place for the sole of its foot. The foundations are destroyed, and the edifice stands before us one vast mass of utter ruin.

I will only say, in conclusion, that I trust I have in this, as in my two previous volumes, written in that spirit of courtesy towards those who see not as I do on this question, which ought to characterize all Christian controversy. If it should be found that even a seemingly unkind expression should have, in a single instance, escaped my pen, it would be to me the source of sincere regret.

London, October, 1866.

THE END OF ALL THINGS.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

Next in importance, according to Millenarian notions, to the second coming of Christ to reign personally on earth, is the "First Resurrection," or the raising of the righteous dead. This, our Millenarian brethren say, is to be contemporaneous with the personal advent of our Lord. They admit, of course, that there will be as certainly a resurrection of the unjust as of the just; but they maintain that while the latter will be raised from their graves simultaneously with the appearing of Christ in the air, the resurrection of the former will not take place until the end of the Millennium,

which, as the word "Millennium" significs, will not be until the expiration of a thousand years. I regard the notion that there will be this interval of a thousand years, or indeed any interval of time at all, between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked, as altogether fanciful. That the resurrection of both the classes into which mankind are divided will take place contemporaneously, appears to me so clear that the evidence in its favour comes home to my mind with, in a sense, the force of moral demonstration. I hope to be able, before I close this chapter, to make this fact as plain to the minds of my readers as it ever has been to my own mind.

The first portion of the Old Testament Scriptures in which a very explicit reference is made to the resurrection, is in the second verse of the twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel:—"And," says that prophet, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

This language of Daniel points so plainly to a contemporaneous resurrection of the

righteous and unrighteous, that Millenarians have ever found the passage to be a formidable foe to the resurrection part of their system. Some of them, indeed, have felt the difficulty so great of reconciling the passage with their views, that they have not even attempted to grapple fully with it, while others have sought to explain it away by giving their own renderings of Daniel's language wholly unwarranted. The latter mode of meeting the verse, which is manifestly irreconcileable with the Millenarian creed, as the verse is popularly understood, is the one which is most generally resorted to. But if this mode of getting rid of a troublesome argument may be had recourse to, there is no opinion in the wide range of theology which may not be shown to be groundless. Those Millenarians who seek to get rid of the difficulty in this way should, in the first instance, remember that they are not agreed among themselves as to what the right rendering is; and secondly, they should not forget that the best Hebrew scholars, Jewish as well as Christian, regard the version of the passage in our Bibles as

being in strict accordance with the sense of the passage in the original.

I am sure I only express the sentiments of every intelligent reader of the verse in question when I say that were any given number of men of superior understanding, and remarkable for their accurate comprehension of the meaning of words, appointed to employ such language as would most clearly convey the idea that the two classes of mankind—the righteous and the wicked—were to rise simultaneously from their graves on the coming of Christ again to our earth, they would one and all admit that they could not employ any combination of words which would more fitly or faithfully express the sentiment, than that which we find in this second verse of the twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel:-"And many," which means the multitude or all, "of them that sleep in the earth shall awake." What could be plainer than the intimation that they shall all awake at once -the wicked as well as the righteous? But still more conclusive as to the simultaneousness of the resurrection of both classes is the sentence which follows:-"Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." The two classes here indicated embrace the whole of mankind. The righteous are to awake to everlasting life, while the unrighteous are to awake to shame and everlasting contempt. The awakening of both classes, though to a doom so solemnly different, takes place at the same moment.

The thing is indeed to my mind so plain that I feel myself unfit to enter into any elaborate argument on the point. If the language of Daniel does not clearly affirm the truth, that the resurrection of the just and unjust which is to take place on the second coming of Christ, will be at the same instant—for it will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—all I shall say is, that, as already remarked, I know no phraseology in the meaning of which any confidence could be reposed.

There is no passage in the Old Testament that has proved more perplexing to Millenarians, when endeavouring to bring it into harmony with their views, than the one in question. The result has been a great variety of explanations of the passage, some of them

so manifestly without even the semblance of a foundation, that one cannot help wondering how they ever could have been brought seriously forward by intelligent and sober-minded men. The "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy" has laboured hard to reconcile the passage with the Millennial theory regarding the resurrection; and it must be admitted that it has displayed great learning and ability in its anxiety to accomplish its object. Two of its most able and elaborate articles, written for this purpose, have been since republished by Messrs. Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, and have reached a second edition. A distinguished clergyman of the Church of England is the avowed author of these articles, but as they appeared in the quarterly organ of Millenarianism, with all the weight of editorial indorsation, it is right we should speak of them as the utterances on the subject, of the "Journal of Prophecy." The quarterly Millenarian organ assumes that the verse, "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt,"

refers to the beginning of the Millennium. "The time specified here," says the "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy," "is universally admitted to be the commencement of the Millennium." This is mere assumption; and it is an assumption which is altogether at variance with the fact. But the expedient of "assuming" things which suit their system, is one to which Millenarian writers, as a body, are in the habit of resorting. No doubt it is for them a very convenient way of dealing with difficulties in relation to their creed; but it is a mode of meeting an opponent which never has been recognized, and never can be, in controversy of any kind. So far from its being "universally admitted" that the time specified in the verse in question is "the commencement of the Millennium," all our most approved commentators, including even the Millenarian, Dr. Gill, apply the language, viewing it in connection with the expression "at that time," used in the first verse, as applicable to the general resurrection at the last day. Boothroyd, Lightfoot, Horsley, Scott, are a few out of the many eminent

expositors of Scripture who take this view of the passage. Indeed I am not aware that any distinguished divine, ancient or modern, with the exception of certain extreme Millenarians, regard the passage in the light in which it is represented by the "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy." Some few theologians, it is true, think that the verse relates to a figurative resurrection of holy principles, not to a personal resurrection at all; but that view is so indefensible, and so few have adopted it, that I do not think it necessary to utter a single word in reply to it. My only surprise is, that a man so able and so acute as the Rev. Dr. Brown, of Glasgow, should have committed himself to such an interpretation of the verse. Surely in his controversy with the Millenarians in reference to that particular portion of divine truth, he was not reduced to the necessity of putting the construction in question on the passage.

There is a parallel passage in the gospel of John to the one in Daniel, so far as regards the simultaneousness of the resurrection of the just and unjust. The passage will be found in the fifth chapter of that evangelist's gospel. It begins with the twenty-fifth and ends with the twenty-ninth verse. But the verses which speak more precisely and emphatically on the point are the twenty-fifth, the twenty-eighth, and the twenty-ninth. Let it be remembered, too, that the language in this portion of Scripture is the language of our Lord. In the twenty-fifth verse, Jesus says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live;" that is, when Christ comes again from heaven to earth. The expression "the dead" must, if there be any meaning in language, mean the dead generally. If only believers had been intended, the fact would have been intimated by our Lord, so that that should not be said of the wicked, constituting the majority of those prophetically seen to be in their graves, which could be true only of the righteous. But all the dead are here described as hearing the voice of the Son of God, and living-in other

words, coming out of their graves. I affirm that nothing can explain away this manifest meaning of our Lord's words. Ingenious attempts may continue to be made, as they already have been, with that view, but they will signally fail, as all past efforts of the kind have failed. There the words of Christ still stand, and still continue to convey the same meaning to all who are not blinded to the obvious import of language by a preconceived and cherished theory.

Not less explicit nor less emphatic are the words of our Lord to the same effect in the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth verses, "Marvel not at this," says Jesus: "for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." Observe how decided in its tone, and how universal in its scope, is the language of our Lord as recorded in these two verses. "All that are in their graves shall hear his voice,"—that is on the resurrection morn. "All." Not

the righteous only, for they will not be the only persons that will be in their graves when our Lord comes a second time into our world. The wicked will be found lying promiscuously in their graves with the righteous when Christ comes. And what is more—the thought is a most painful one—the wicked will, as has been intimated already, constitute the great majority of those who will be found lving in their graves when Christ comes again to our world. And all who do thus hear the voice of Christ on the solemn occasion will obey that voice; for they shall, we are told, come forth, that is, come forth from the prisonhouse beneath the earth in which many of them have been confined for thousands of vears.

This, I maintain, would, if standing alone in the Word of God, have sufficed to establish, on an unassailable ground, the doctrine of the simultaneousness of the resurrection of the good and the bad—the righteous and the wicked. But this is not the only evidence with which we are furnished by our Lord, in the same portion of Scripture, in support of the

same truth. In the succeeding verse we are furnished with proof no less conclusive that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will be simultaneous. "And," adds our Saviour, "shall come forth," that is, all who are in their graves, "they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation "

Again, I ask, could any combination of words be framed which could more explicitly assert the fact of a simultaneous resurrection of the good and the evil, the righteous and the wicked, the just and the unjust, than that which constitutes the passage in question? Should any Millenarian author undertake an answer to this work, may I ask him to present us with a form of words in which, supposing he shared my conviction, that the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked will be simultaneous, instead of there being an interval of a thousand years between the coming forth of each class from their graves-he would express that conviction in language more explicit than that of our Lord's in the passage to which

I have been adverting. I hold the thing to be impossible. If the language in question admits of any other construction than that which I have put upon it, then words have in this instance failed to fulfil their functions.

One portion of Scripture which Millenarians strenuously contend establishes the doctrine of two resurrections—the first of the righteous, and the second of the wicked a thousand years afterwards-is contained in the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. It begins with the twenty-second and ends with the twenty-fourth verse. "For," says Paul, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom of God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." I say advisedly, that no one who has not a system to support would ever bring himself to believe that this passage of Scripture could be quoted in favour of the doctrine of two separate resurrections—the one of the just and

the other of the unjust—with an interval of a thousand years between them. It is stated in the twenty-third verse, which is the verse to which Millenarians attach the greatest importance, that every man is to rise from the grave in his own order. I regard the right rendering of the phrase, "every man in his own order." to be that as the world is now divided into two great classes, and will be found to be so on the morning of the resurrection, all who belong to the righteous class, or who are Christ's, will rise before those who are placed in the category of the wicked. There is not the faintest intimation in what is here said that there will be two separate resurrections at some interval of time, whether of a day or of a thousand years. The word "first," as employed in the verse under consideration, I understand as indicating that the saints will be first in point of time to rise from their graves, as a mark of honour shown to them by their Lord. The wicked are not mentioned at all; but the very fact that the righteous are to be raised first necessarily involves the idea that there are others to be raised who are not righteous.

And as we know, as has just been observed, that all the world will on the day of the resurrection, be as now, divided into two great classes only, the other class, or the wicked, will, in the matter of their resurrection, follow in the order of time the first or righteous class.

I could conceive of no language less liable to be misunderstood than the language of Paul in this part of Scripture. But if there could be a doubt still remaining on the point, I should feel yet more amazed if that doubt could exist when the next verse is read in connection with the one to which I have been adverting:—"Then," says the apostle, in the twenty-fourth verse, "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall put down all rule and all authority and power."

Of course the advocates of two resurrections at an interval of a thousand years between them, insist that Paul is here speaking of the Millennium, as embodying the idea of the personal reign of Christ in our world for a thousand years. But they have not the slightest ground for putting such a construc-

tion on the language of the apostle. Their favourite resort to the argument, that "the end" means "the end of the dispensation," or "the end of the age," will not avail them here; for it is added that the end will not come until Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. That very fact not only proves that the apostle is here referring to "The End of All Things"the title I have chosen for this work-but brings home to them the charge of a manifest inconsistency; for while Paul is here speaking of a period in the history of the Church and of the world in which Christ is "to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father," it is one of the most prominent and important features in their system, that it is only then—that is after the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the saints—that he is to receive his kingdom and to commence his reign.

As I am not aware that any anti-Millenarian has ever pointed out this striking inconsistency, so I do not know that any Millenarian of note has sought to deal with the difficulty. I should like exceedingly to see some of the

ablest of the advocates of Millenarianism undertake to bring about a reconciliation between Paul's statements and the views entertained by Millenarians on this subject.

I ought to remark, before I go further, that there are many Millenarians who endeavour to get out of the difficulty by separating the mediatorial reign of Christ from his Millennial reign on earth. The Rev. D. Wilson, Vicar of Islington, belongs to this category of Millenarians. So late as Easter Sunday last year, in a part of his sermon on topics connected with the personal reign of Christ on the earth, he said, that he saw no reason whatever to expect the coming of Christ to reign personally in our world, until after He had delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the To the startling consequences involved in this view of Christ's mediatorial kingdom, I shall have occasion to allude in an after part of my work. In the meantime, I content myself with the remark, that I do not see how to get rid of the difficulty to which I have referred in my preceding observations. Under any circumstances, Christ, according to

some Millenarians, gives up a kingdom when they say He comes to our world to take a personal possession of his Millennial kingdom.

But to return to the passage in the Corinthians, to which I was adverting when I made this digression. Still more, if that were possible, at variance with Millenarian views, is the remainder of the twenty-fourth, and also the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses. "When," says Paul - that is, on the end having come, and Christ having delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father-" when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." All rule and authority and power will not be put down during the Millenarian period of the world's history. There will, as I have again and again had occasion to remark, be much of rebellion in the world during the thousand years, and that rebellion will be triumphant for a certain length of time—no one can sav for what period—after the thousand years have elapsed. To say, then, that during the. Millennium all things will be brought into subjugation to our Lord, would manifestly be to affirm that which is at variance with this particular portion of Scripture. The expression in the twenty-fifth verse, "He must reign till He has put all enemies under his feet," obviously points to his personal rule in heaven, not on our earth. Christ, therefore, will not come to our world until the end of all things, when He will visit the earth to conquer and put all enemies under his feet, the last of those enemies being death, which He will then destroy. These, I repeat, are things which cannot be said of the advent of our Lord, or of his raising his saints from their graves, and glorifying and receiving them to Himself, contemporaneously with the commencement of the thousand years. The passage in question most clearly connects the resurrection of the dead in Christ with the end of all thingsthe end of the world-in the commonly received acceptation of the phrase, which is synonymous here with the end of the mediatorial work of Christ.

Once more, therefore, I affirm there is not

a single word in this passage of Scripture which gives the slightest sanction to the Millenarian theory of a first and second resurrection, the first being that of the righteous, the second that of the wicked, and a period of a thousand years intervening between the two resurrections.

This may be the proper place to state that even among Millenarians themselves there are serious differences of opinion relative to the simultaneousness of the resurrection of the saints. Some of them, while firmly believing that all the righteous will rise from their graves before a single sinner dying in his sins shall be raised, repudiate the idea of all the righteous rising at the same time. They believe that the resurrection of the saints who shall have been in their graves before the personal return of the Lord, will be a process which shall be carried on till the close of the Millennium. They believe that this prolonged resurrection process will be in keeping with the generally received Millenarian conviction, to which I shall advert more fully hereafter-that the judgment of the wicked will last through the

whole Millennial period of this world's history. Among those Millenarians of eminence who entertained the notion of a continuous resurrection of the righteous during the whole or the greater part of the Millennium, may be mentioned the name of the venerable Mede. Millenarians are all proud in being able to include the name of Joseph Mede in the list of advocates of the personal reign of Christ. Let us then listen to him on this point. incline," he says, "on the whole, to the opinion founded on the sentence of St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, chapter four, that all the righteous will rise again during the course of the Millennial kingdom; but in a certain order, according to that of the apostle first in the very commencement of the Millennium, the martyrs, then the rest according to the decree of God the Arbiter, and that this is called the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the just."

Here is at least one eminent Millenarian who did not acquiesce in the almost universally received belief among Millenarians, of an instantaneous resurrection of the saints wrapt in the sleep of death, on the personal return of the Lord to our world. As I believe that the resurrection of the saints will not take place until the appearance of Christ to judge the world, when all that are in their graves—the wicked as well as the righteous—shall rise to receive according to that they have done in the body, whether good or evil, I do not feel called on to make any observations on the views of Mede and those who share his sentiments respecting the resurrection of the righteous.

But there is yet another point connected with the resurrection of believers on which Millenarians are also at variance among themselves. Mr. Bickersteth, in his "Practical Guide to the Prophecies," adverts to the question as to whether there will or will not be a resurrection of the saints on the personal appearance of our Lord. "Some," he says in that work, "who believe that our Lord will personally appear for the conversion of the Jews, doubt whether there will be then a resurrection of the saints." Mr. Bickersteth takes the affirmative side of the question. He says he

is satisfied, after weighing the arguments on each side, that such a personal resurrection is revealed, although from the examination he had to devote to the subject, it is but a fair inference that he had at one time been undecided on the point.

I have on repeated occasions in previous parts of this work, expressed my amazement that Millenarians could, even where they possessed the highest order of talent, reason themselves into the belief that certain portions of Scripture supported their views. In no instance has that amazement been greater than in relation to the verse in this fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, where Paul says :- "Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." It is here most distinctly stated that after the resurrection of those "who are Christ's"-which I hold to be the general resurrection at the last day, though that of the wicked is not specifically mentioned-"then cometh the end when Christ shall have delivered up the kingdom to

God, even the Father." I am sure that such of my readers as have no preconceived theory on the Millennial question, will share my surprise that this twenty-fourth verse should be pressed into the Millennial service; for it is one of the most prominent points in connection with the alleged personal reign of Christ on earth, that it is only, properly speaking, on his second advent, that He comes into possession of his kingdom. Then, and not till then, according to the Millenarian hypothesis, does our Lord begin his reign, which reign is to last a thousand years. Yet in the passage in question, it is distinctly stated that Christ is at the time referred to-the end having come -to deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; words which prove, if words are capable of proving anything, that his reignnamely, his mediatorial reign-has ceased. One is constantly meeting in theological, as well as in other controversy, with great inconsistencies in the arguments which are advanced, but I am constrained to repeat here what I have already said—namely, that I do not remember ever to have met with anything

so striking as the inconsistency of Millenarianism in this case.

It is, however, but right to mention that, though many Millenarians are chargeable with this transparent inconsistency, the charge does not apply to all, perhaps not to a majority of their number. Among the latter I am happy to find the Rev. T. Birks, author of "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy." He and I are in perfect accord as to the time at which our Lord is to deliver up the kingdom to the Father. Nor does he content himself with simply expressing his views on the point, but evidently shares my astonishment that any one among his Millenarian brethren could be found, who would place this transfer of the kingdom of Christ to the Father at the commencement instead of at the close of the personal reign of our Lord on the earth. He points out very clearly the magnitude of the difficulties which are involved in the theory with which I am dealing. I can only spare space for two or three of his observations on this aspect of Millenarianism. In his chapter under the title of "The Kingdom of Christ," in

his "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," Mr. Birks thus expresses himself on this point: "The close of the Millennium is the time when the kingdom is delivered to the Father. That the event, spoken of by the apostle, does not occur at the opening of the Millennium, is apparent from a comparison with St. John's prophecy. For it occurs only when all enemies are completely subdued under the feet of Christ. But at the close of the Millennium, Satan is loose, and utterly deceives the nations; the earth is peopled with rebels, who go up over its whole breadth, in open hostility to Christ and his people; the sea retains its dead, and death and hell have been cast into the lake of fire. Hence the delivery of the kingdom cannot precede the final judgment of the rest of the dead; since, until then, many who are hostile to Christ are still to be subdued under Him. Again, the present reign of the Son is not a co-ordinate, but a subordinate reign. For Christ is now subordinate to the Father, in the doctrine of the apostles, the faith of the Church, and the views of all holy angels, and still more in the convictions

of unregenerate men. He is subordinate in the whole economy of the gospel, as a Sacrifice, a High Priest, an Advocate, an Intercessor for sinners in heaven. He is subordinate in all the emblems of prophecy, as the slain Lamb, the Angel, the Priest at the altar, the Son of man, caught up to the throne of God. And this heavenly glory will never cease. The Lord will continue associated with the Father, in equal divine honour, but personal subordination, for ever and ever. Again, the language of the apostle seems to imply that the kingdom resigned is, in some sense, peculiar to the Son before that resignation. But this is not true of the present kingdom of Providence, which is properly and eminently the kingdom of God the Father, administered now by the risen Saviour. On all these accounts the hypothesis, which places the delivery of the kingdom at the opening of the Millennium, appears to me completely opposed to the whole drift of the apostolic message. The kingdom is that for which our Lord is now waiting at the right hand of the Father; which He begins to exercise visibly at his return; and which

is, in some important sense, to be delivered up to the Father, after the final completion of the work of judgment."

These are exactly my views on this one point, formed long before I knew that they were Mr. Birks'. They seem to me so clearly revealed in the Word of God, that I cannot understand how any reader of Scripture, with average intelligence, can fail to perceive them. And yet a great many, though not a majority, of our Millenarian brethren reject them as unscriptural.

To those who are acquainted with the Millenarian question, it is not necessary I should say again, that all Millenarians dwell with the greatest confidence on the support which this fifteenth chapter of Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians gives to their system. But there is no necessity for my adverting to the writings of Millenarians on this portion of divine truth, because they severally, with a very few exceptions, go over the same ground. I have especially referred to what Mr. Birks says on the several passages, because he makes an important concession to

me in relation to my views on these passages. For the same reason I cannot refrain from calling attention to what Mr. Molyneux says, in writing, in his "Israel's Future," on the same chapter. He virtually, in fact, while zealously contending for the personal reign of Christ as commencing with his second advent, gives up the point of his earthly reign, or of the Millennium lasting a thousand years. Whether it be a day or a thousand years, he says, it matters not.

"I heed not," he remarks "the interval, whether it be long or short, between this and the second resurrection. Be it a day or a millennium, it matters not. I touch not the question; I care not, comparatively, about it. It is the fact of the first, the distinct resurrection of saints, which is the matter of moment. It is the separation from the rest; the resurrection out from amongst the dead; the rising exclusively and emphatically unto life, which is the point, the great point to be laid hold on, contended for, and unshrinkingly maintained; because it is the truth of God's own Word, the precious heritage of all his saints."

If, then, the two resurrections—the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked-may be, according to Mr. Molyneux, on the same day, he makes a most important concession to those who hold anti-Millenarian opinions. He virtually gives up the thousand years' intermediate personal reign of our Lord on earth, and, in doing so, gives up, in effect, the whole question; for on the literal interpretation of the thousand years rests the entire Millennial structure. After. let me add, making this important concession, Mr. Molyneux has no right to remain professedly in the Millenarian ranks. Consistency and honesty equally claim at his hands that he should cross the line of separation, and take his place beneath the anti-Millenarian banner. He will find rest for the sole of his foot among us; for we will readily and cordially concede to him all that he stipulates for. He asks, he tells us, for nothing more than that the fact be admitted that the saints shall rise firstno matter how brief the interval between their resurrection and that of the wicked. We do admit that the saints will rise first, and

that until their resurrection is completed, the wicked will remain in their graves. We admit, to use his own words, "the fact of the first, the distinct resurrection of the saints;" their "separation from the rest; the resurrection out from amongst the dead; their rising exclusively and emphatically into life." All, therefore, I repeat, that Mr. Molyneux here asks, we concede to him, and consequently we have a right to claim him as an anti-Millenarian.

Nor can I see, after the concessions he has made to the anti-Millenarians, what reason he can have for hesitating to come over openly to our side. If he is content to accept a Millennium with the personal presence and reign of our Lord on earth, which may only last a single day, or even a less period of time than that, his desires have become reduced to very small proportions indeed, compared with those which he has expressed in other parts of his book, and which he so often, in his pulpit ministrations, brings before the minds of his crowded congregation in language of the most glowing and attractive

kind. What a contrast between the brief Millennium with which Mr. Molyneux would be satisfied, and the surpassingly glorious state of things, lasting for a thousand years, without the reduction of a day, which all other believers in the personal reign of Christ on earth, picture to their own imaginations, and present to the minds of others.

But to return more immediately to the general question of the resurrection of the dead. If yet further proof be required of the fact, that Paul, in the passage to which I have adverted, had a universal and simultaneous raising of the dead from their graves in his view, that supplementary proof will be found in several places towards the end of the same chapter. In the fifty-first and fiftysecond verses we read: "Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." We are here specifically told, that at the sound of the last trumpet the dead shall be raised.

Now, as we read of a last trumpet which shall sound for the purpose of ushering in the general and final judgment, it is clear that Millenarians must labour under a great mistake in supposing that the "last trumpet" here spoken of is one at whose sounding the Millennium is to be ushered in. In that case, there would require, in order to fulfil other portions of Scripture, to be two "last trumpets," and that, we know, would be a contradiction. The "last trumpet," therefore, which Paul had in his mind, in thus writing to the Corinthians, must manifestly have been the "last trumpet" which will simultaneously summon the whole world, the righteous and the wicked, to come forth from their graves to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Besides, it is further said, in the fiftysecond verse, that it is "the dead" generally, not the righteous only, who are to be raised. Some Millenarians imagine that the force of this argument against their system is neutralized by the word "incorruptible," which follows. But a right understanding of the scope of the passage will show that there is no force in this supposition. Paul is only, all through the chapter, speaking of the saints of God, and, therefore, the phrase, "raised incorruptible" was only meant by him to apply to them. Nothing, it seems to me, could be clearer than this. The apostle adds, in the fifty-fourth verse, that when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." I hold the truth to be as plain as it would be possible for words to present it to our minds, that connecting together the various portions of the chapter which speak of the resurrection of the dead-Paul had the general resurrection at the last day in his mind's eve. Until that time, death will not be swallowed up in victory. Death will, as I have more than once before observed, exist, even according to the admission of the great majority of Millenarians themselves, throughout the whole of the thousand years during which they say our Lord is to reign personally on earth. It would consequently have been

at variance with the fact for the apostle to have said, in relation to the commencement of the Millennium, "Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." But I shall have occasion to recur to a consideration of this portion of Scripture towards the close of the volume, when I shall show more fully that the view I have taken of the apostle's meaning here is the right one.

CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

(Continued.)

I PASS over one or two portions of Scripture in which incidental reference is made to what Millenarians regard as a first and second resurrection, in order that I may advert to that portion of Scripture which they consider the most decisive in its testimony to the truth of their theory. I pass over the portions of Scripture to which I allude all the more willingly, because Millenarians themselves look upon them as only bearing very indirectly on the points at issue. The great stronghold of Millenarians, so far as regards their own opinion on the subject, in connection with their theory of a first and second resurrection after an interval of a thousand years, is to be found in the twentieth chapter of Revelation.

It will be observed that though, first in the third and afterwards in the fourth verse of the chapter, we read of Satan being bound a thousand years, and of the saints living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, not a word is said of either a first or second resurrection until we come to the fifth verse. "But," it is said in that verse, "the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." But in order to view the verse in question in its connection with the context, it is necessary to read the fourth. "And," says the apostle John, "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

This verse, if taken in its literal sense, is entirely subversive of the Millenarian scheme in connection with the doctrine of the

universal resurrection of the saints a thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked. According to their view none of the saints of God are to be excluded from the general resurrection of believers, which will take place on the coming of Christ to reign personally on earth; but the language of the apostle clearly conveys the idea that those only are to reign with Christ who were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and who had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands. Those only, therefore, according to this passage, who had suffered martyrdom for the cause of Christ, or who had kept themselves clear from all contact with the beast, personifying, in all probability, some system of error and of sin-were to be those who should reign with Christ for the thousand years. Now as the Millenarian edifice has its foundation in the literal interpretation of Scripture, we have a right to meet our friends on their own ground, and to insist on their admitting literal interpretations generally. Taking then this passage literally, the number of those saints who are to be raised at the first resurrection—conceding for the moment that there is to be a first resurrection a thousand years before the second—will be very limited indeed compared with the multitude which no man can number of the people of God, who shall be resting in their graves at the advent, according to the Millenarian view of our Lord and Saviour's second coming to the earth.

But we are not yet done with the fifth verse. "The rest of the dead," we are told, "lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." Now I frankly acknowledge that there is a difficulty here. I go even further than that; I admit that the obvious meaning of the verse, taken by itself, is that at the end of a thousand years there will be another resurrection. Therefore if there were other portions of Scripture which spoke unmistakably in accordance with the verse in question, we would be constrained to come to the conclusion that after an interval of a thousand years from the first resurrection, there will be a second resurrection. But there is no other passage either in the Old or New

Testament which speaks the same language, or which can be even said to be substantially similar. The passage, so far as relates to the "thousand years," and the expression "first resurrection," stands alone in the Word of God. But even in the absence of any parallel passage, there might be at least some seeming reason for accepting in their literal significance the expressions, "first resurrection," and "the rest of the dead lived not till the thousand years were finished," provided we could not point to any passages of Scripture which are at irreconcileable variance with the verse on which I am now animadverting. It so happens, however, that there are many such passages. To some of these I have alluded already, in a previous part of this chapter, and therefore, though I might adduce others, it cannot be deemed necessary that I should do so. I am sure that every enlightened and unbiassed person will at once feel the logical force of the argument, that where a certain statement, or doctrine, is supposed to be found in a particular portion of Scripture it ought not to be adopted if it can be shown

that numerous other passages explicitly and emphatically express an entirely opposite meaning. I could conceive of nothing more unreasonable. In all our courts of law the decisions given by judges and juries are always the result of the preponderance of the amount of evidence, combined with its clearness and quality. It is to the circumstance of fixing on some isolated passages in the Word of God, notwithstanding that we find a number of concurrent passages to a contrary effect, that we are to ascribe all the most pernicious errors which have ever corrupted the Christian faith. We have one notable instance of this in this very book—the book of Revelation—to some of whose prophetic portions I am now referring. The apostle John, in one of his visions mentions, among other things, that he saw four beasts and four-and-twenty elders falling down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, "and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints." The latter clause of this verse is quoted with all confidence by the members of the Romish Church, as an authority for praying to the saints, whom they

expect in return to intercede in their behalf. And so with regard to the Popish doctrine of purgatory. The adherents of the Papacy base that doctrine on one verse in the third chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, "If any man's work," says Paul, in the fifteenth verse of that chapter, "shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire."

I could easily fill many pages of this volume with illustrations of the great extent and pernicious purposes to which the literal interpretation principle is perverted in relation to theological subjects. While on the one hand Millenarians would be unwilling to admit the mischief which that principle has wrought, anti-Millenarians, but partially acquainted with the subject, have no adequate ideas of the extent to which the cause of Christian truth suffers from this cause. And certainly Millenarians have no right to complain of this, or feel surprised that it should be so. Others are but carrying out their views. They are but applying to particular phases of their own faith those general principles which believers in the personal reign of our Lord have dogmatically laid down. In my first volume I quoted various illustrations of this; but there was one which is so exceedingly appropriate and so very clear and conclusive, that it were impossible to imagine anything better adapted to establish my case. Let me therefore advert to it again, but in a condensed form. It bears especially on the subject of the two resurrections, because, as in their case there not only is no other passage which gives the slightest countenance to the doctrine of a first and second resurrection, but numerous other passages are doctrinally at entire variance with it. I refer to the perverted and pernicious purposes to which have been applied our Lord's words when, on instituting the Supper, He said to his disciples, placing at the same time a piece of bread in their hands, "Take, eat, this is my body." Though, rendering the words literally, there is nothing parallel to them in the New Testament Scriptures, yet it is maintained by the Church of Rome, that the bread was actually transformed into the body of Christ; and what is more, that so is now the bread or the wafer which is used in the Sacrifice of the Mass in that

Church. It may be said by some Millenarians who may read this work, as it has been said to me in private conversation, that the words in question of our Lord are so manifestly to be understood in a figurative sense, that no intelligent person could put a literal construction upon them. A single sentence—that sentence embodying a single fact—will, as I have before shown, effectually and at once dispose of this argument. The fact to which I allude is this -that a hundred and fifty millions of the professedly Christian world, members of the Church of Rome, do interpret our Lord's words literally when he said, "Take, eat; this is my body;" and they accordingly believe, every time they partake of the communion, that they eat the actual flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ. The change which takes place, as they feel persuaded, in the bread into the real body of the Redeemer, they call transubstantiation. But the Roman Catholics are not alone in their fearful perversion of the passage of Scripture in question. The Lutherans, numbering several millions of souls, entertain essentially the same view, in this respect, as the adherents

of Popery. The only difference is, that they use the word "consubstantiation" instead of "transubstantiation." In both cases the doctrine of the real presence of Christ in the bread is firmly maintained.

Let no Millenarian, therefore, say, when contending for the literal interpretation of Scripture, that no one could fail to perceive that the language of our Lord in the words to which I have thus adverted, was emblematical. The fact that upwards of one hundred and fifty millions of persons, at this hour professing to be the disciples of Christ, understand and act on them in a literal sense, unanswerably disposes of that assumption.

In the same way and on the same ground, Millenarians put a literal construction on the phrase, the "first resurrection," and the saints living and reigning for a thousand years. Now this I maintain to be illogical in the highest degree. In the presence of so many other portions of the sacred volume which teach an entirely different doctrine, it is palpably at variance with all the recognized rules of reasoning to seek to ground on them the doctrine of

a "first" resurrection of the saints—their living and reigning with Christ a thousand years—and the resurrection at the end of that period of the wicked, who until then are to remain in their graves.

But there is another consideration to which I bespeak the special attention of my readers, as proving beyond all question that there must be a simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. I have had occasion over and over again to refer to the fact as admitted by most Millenarians themselves, that during the thousand years in which they say Christ is to reign personally on earth, iniquity will exist to a greater or less extent in the world, and that not only death will then, as now, be the wages of sin to the wicked, but that the righteous will sicken and die, and be consigned to the grave, just as at present. Well, then, Millenarians themselves will admit, as readily as we do, that the righteous who are born and die during the thousand years of what they regard as the personal reign of Christ on earth, will have to rise again at some time or other from their graves, otherwise they could not be

received, body and soul reunited, into heaven with the saints who had lived before the Millennium, As Millenarians themselves do not say or suppose, that there will be any other resurrection, after that of the wicked, at the close of the thousand years, there is no way of escaping the conclusion that there must be a simultaneous resurrection of all the righteous who have died during the Millennium, and of all the ungodly from the death of Cain down to the last moment of the Millennial thousand years. I should exceedingly like to see some of our ablest and most zealous Millenarians undertake to answer this argument in favour of my position, that there will be, if not at the commencement, at the close, of the thousand years, a simultaneous resurrection of the just and the unjust.

I come now to the sixth verse of the chapter, which does not give any greater countenance than the fifth to the Millennial hypothesis of a first and second resurrection, after an interval between them of a thousand years. "Blessed and holy," are the words of that verse, "is he that hath part in the first

resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

Millenarians dwell in tones of triumph on the expression in the end of the verse, "They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him"—that is, with Christ -"a thousand years." They confidently speak of the saints reigning with Christ on the earth during the thousand years, as if that were a new thing, and Scripture were silent on the subject. But we read of the reign of the saints long before this, and altogether unconnected with Millenarian ideas. It is said in the seventeenth verse of the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that they who have received abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign, "and do reign" in life by one Jesus Christ. In the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of the same apostle's First Epistle to the Corinthians, this language occurs: "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, ye have reigned as kings without us." The reigning of the

saints is not therefore a thing to be deferred until the Millennium, but is a thing of the past and the present. They have reigned, and they do reign now.

The quotations I have made from the Romans attest the fact in direct terms. The same truth is clearly shown, though by implication, in various other parts of the New Testament. I will only invite attention to one instance confirmatory of this.

Even in this book of Revelation, on whose utterances Millenarians lay so much stress, we read of a reigning of the saints, which cannot, by any amount of ingenuity, be construed in such a way as to make it support the doctrine of the personal reign of the saints in company with the personal reign of our Lord, in this world. The passage to which I allude is in the latter part of the fifth verse, and the whole of the sixth, in the first chapter. "Unto Him," says John, "that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." John, speaking in the name of all

the saints of God then on earth, represents them as kings and priests. Now it will not be denied by any Millenarian that the very idea of king necessarily involves the exercise of regal power or sovereignty; and therefore the people of God do reign now as kings, for John, it will be observed, has not yet begun to bring before those to whom he addressed himself, any of those marvellous visions which constitute the leading contents of his subsequent chapters. But I will not advert to this part of the Millenarian creed any further at present, as I shall have occasion to recur to it in my next chapter.

I have called attention in this chapter, in anticipation of my next, to the thousand years' reign of the saints, for the purpose of showing, from the twentieth of Revelation, that those saints who are said to have thus reigned from the time of their having "had part in the first resurrection," are included in the general judgment which they admit is to take place at "The End of All Things," and is immediately to follow the resurrection of the wicked. It would assuredly be strange, and very unlike the usual administration of the moral govern-

ment of God, if after all his saints had reigned literally and personally on earth for a thousand years, they should have to appear with the rest of mankind before the judgment-seat of Christ when He holds the final grand assize on all the world. In the five closing verses of the chapter it is said, "And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

To any one who would say that he did not regard these five verses as rointing to the final judgment of all mankind, I would simply say, "Will you then specify any particular portion of God's Word in which is contained an authority for the belief in a general judgment Before God seated on "the great white throne" in the eleventh verse, John saw, as he tells us in the following verse, the dead, small and great, stand. I think there cannot be a doubt that the expression, "the dead, small and great," means all that ever lived on the earth. That this great gathering of the dead, small and great, included both classes of mankind—the righteous and the wicked-is so clear to my mind that I cannot comprehend how any one could fail to perceive it. One of the books, we are told, which were opened, was the book of life; the other books were unquestionably the books of eternal death. Out of these two classes of books the vast assemblage—an assemblage we know from other parts of Scripture too great to be numbered-were to be judged according to what were written in these books respecting the words or the conduct of all who were put on their trial on the awful occasion. It follows that the righteous whose names were found in the book of life were acquitted and rewarded, while it is no less manifest that those whose names were found in the other books, were condemned and punished. Indeed this is expressly stated in the fifteenth verse, where it is said that whosoever were not found in the book of life were cast into the lake of fire. I repeat that the expression "the dead," which is twice used in the twelfth verse-in the first instance with the additional words, "small and great"-manifestly means the whole of those that had ever lived, and that consequently the resurrection which must necessarily have taken place as a preliminary occurrence to the appearance of "the dead"--the recent dead - before God, seated on "the great white throne," was a general resurrection; a simultaneous rising of the righteous and the wicked. It follows, if I am right in this view, that the "first resurrection" of the saints spoken of as taking place at the commencement of the thousand years, is an expression which is not to be understood as the Millenarians maintain it ought to be, in a strictly literal sense. In-

deed it is impossible it can be so interpreted, because a resurrection of many saints took place on the death of Christ. As however nothing definite is known respecting that resurrection, I only allude to it as a fact attested on divine authority. And being a fact, Millenarians are demonstrably wrong in calling the resurrection of the saints, which they say is to take place at the beginning of the Millennium, the first resurrection. The first resurrection of saints, as I have just said, took place at the death of Christ, and it is therefore a misnomer to call the resurrection, which they maintain will occur at the commencement of the thousand Millennial years, the first resurrection. If there is to be such a resurrection at all, the Millenarians are bound to speak of it as the second resurrection. But as John taught by the Spirit of God, and who must therefore speak with accuracy, calls that resurrection the first resurrection, whereas if it were to be a bodily resurrection of believers in the same sense as was that of the "many" saints who rose from their graves at the time of the Redeemer's death, it would necessarily

be the second resurrection of the saints, the conclusion is inevitable that John did not use the words, "first resurrection," in relation to the literal rising from their graves of the bodies of believers.

There is one consideration in connection with this assumed interval of a literal thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked, which involves the consistency of some of our ablest Millenarians. When it accords with some part of their theory in connection with the personal reign of Christ, they quote with an air of triumph passages of Scripture in which one particular period of time is put for another. The passage in Peter's second chapter, for example, where it is said that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, is often quoted by Millenarians. The latest Millenarian of note, so far as my reading of modern Millenarian works is concerned, who quotes this passage from Peter, is the Rev. Samuel Garratt. He quotes it with the view, at least in part, of showing that the thousand years' interval

between the first and second resurrections may mean an indefinite series of thousand years, during which God will be engaged in the work of creating the promised new heavens and new earth. In his "Commentary on the Revelation of St. John," he represents God as being engaged during the whole of the Millennium in this work of a second creation of a glorious heavens and earth. But lest I should be considered either by himself or by some of his friends as misconceiving in any way his views on this point, I will quote, in justice to him, his own words:-"The new heavens and new earth," says Mr. Garratt, "are described in Revelation after the Millennium, or thousand years of blessedness. We must bear in mind that all God's great works take time. Six days—six of God's days—were occupied in the creation of earth as it is now, and we must not suppose that God will make all things new in a moment. It ought not to surprise us if it takes a Millennium to re-create our earth. 'One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

To the word "Millennium," Mr. Garratt subjoins a footnote, which is as follows: "Whether of actual years or of prophetical years -three hundred and sixty years each." Now assuming Mr. Garratt's alternative period of three hundred and sixty years for each day to be correct, that would represent God as being three hundred and sixty thousand years occupied in creating the new heavens and the new earth. Mr. Garratt would also, by the alternative period which he allows for the duration of the Millennium, interpose an interval of three hundred and sixty thousand years between the first and second resurrections. What the upholders, among his Millenarian brethren, of the literal thousand years' theory will say to this, is a matter which I leave to be settled between himself and them. One point to which I wish to call attention, and I do attach great importance to it, is this-that if Mr. Garratt, or any other Millenarian, quotes in support of some particular notion the first part of the verse referred to in Peter, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years," he is bound to allow the same mode of interpretation in reference to the second part-namely, "And a thousand years as one day," which will at once overthrow the Millenarian theory of an absolutely necessary thousand years intervening between the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked, and reduce the length of the possible interval to one day. I should like to see how any Millenarian will meet this difficulty in accordance with Mr. Garratt's mode of interpreting the passage in question. Any such attempt would inevitably end in failure. According to Mr. Garratt, the interval between the two resurrections may possibly extend to three hundred and sixty thousand years; but, on the other hand, it is no less probable that it may only last one day.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

(Concluded.)

It is necessary to make a few more observations in relation to those parts of the twentieth chapter of Revelation which bear on the question of the two resurrections—the resurrection of the righteous and the resurrection of the wicked, after an interval of a thousand years. In that chapter there is confessedly much that is emblematical, and consequently difficult to be comprehended. It does not follow that those passages which partake in the greatest measure of the figurative element either have no meaning at all, or will always be beyond the powers of the human mind to understand. All such parts of this chapter have a meaning, and that meaning will be known hereafter; but I think that what Irenæus, one of the Millenarian Fathers of the third century, said in relation to other prophecies, "They will only be understood when events have fulfilled them."

But while I acknowledge the obscurity that enshrouds so much of this chapter, it may not be amiss to advert very briefly to some of the leading modes of interpretation which eminent divines have adopted, leaving my readers to come to their own conclusions as to how far any of them are or are not satisfactory.

The most popular idea among anti-Millenarians, with regard to the expression in the fifth verse, "This is the first resurrection," is, that the resurrection spoken of means, not a resurrection of bodies or of persons, but a resurrection or revival of those principles which constitute the distinguishing features of the gospel. It is admitted as readily by Millenarians as by those who do not believe in a personal reign of Christ, and of the risen saints on earth, that the vision of Ezekiel, when in the valley of dry bones he saw the dry bones live, was not a literal re-animation of the dry bones, but a resurrection of religious

principles, or revival of religious life. So, too, when Christ said, in reference to the prevalent expectation among the Jews of his day that Elias was to re-appear among them, that Elias had come already in the person of John the Baptist, He did not mean that John the Baptist was Elias, or that Elias was in any way, in a physical sense, embodied in John the Baptist. Elias, it is distinctly stated, had come in the spirit only in the person of John the Baptist. And the expression of our Lord that Elias had come already, was, we are told, perfectly understood by the disciples. Nor is this coming of Elias in spirit and power in the person of the messenger who came to prepare the way of the Lord, less intelligible to every reader of the Word of God. In the same sense, there is no reason why there should not be an exemplification of the principles of the saints in glory by the saints on earth, which might fitly be compared to a resurrection.

Paul also speaks of a spiritual resurrection, or a revival of religious life, in the fifteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, where, in allusion to the bringing in again of the Jews into the Church of God, he says, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but as life from the dead." No one can deny that Paul here speaks symbolically, not literally. It is the resurrection of holy principles, not of physical bodies, to which he alludes in this passage. And why should not the same figurative principle of interpretation be applied to the expression in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, "This is the first resurrection"?

The Rev. Ingram Cobbin, in his "Condensed Commentary of the Scriptures," enumerates some of our leading divines who have adopted this view. Among the number are Whitby, Guyse, Hopkins, Doddridge, President Edwards, Boothroyd, and Buck. I could greatly enlarge the list of theologians of eminence who have understood the expression under consideration in the same sense, but it is not necessary, because from the majority of the pulpits of the present day that view of the phrase is put forward as the one which is in accordance with the mind of the Spirit. I

may add, that I know of no more precise representation of the general opinion among divines in relation to the phrase "first resurrection" than that which has been given by a venerable man, with whom I was on terms of personal intimacy during the latter years of his life. I allude to William Jones, so well known by his "Dictionary of the Bible," his "History of the Waldenses and Albigenses," etc. In his "Lectures on the Apocalypse," in summing up the arguments on both sides of the question, Mr. Jones writes as follows:-"Upon the whole, I think we may see from the plain concurring doctrine of the New Testament, that at the second or personal coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, which will be immediately followed by the judgment of both-by the eternal and heavenly reward of the righteous, and the everlasting punishment of the wicked; and if so, it must follow, as a necessary consequence, that the first resurrection, which is a thousand years before this, must be understood not in a literal but metaphorical sense."

Other writers of high standing in the world of theology have taken a view of the expression "first resurrection," which differs in some important respects alike from the views of the authors I have mentioned and of those who understand the words in their literal significance. They consider the resurrection spoken of in the verse in question as not only a spiritual resurrection, but as a resurrection that is past. Among these are to be numbered Bishop Hall, Richard Baxter, Gipps, Vintingra, and the eminent American theologian, Dr. Bush, in addition to nearly all the reformers.

But I must not dwell at greater length on this phase of the Millenarian question. To my own mind it appears clear as the sun at noon-day, that the expression "first resurrection," in the fifth verse of the twentieth chapter of Revelation, is to be understood in a figurative sense. First of all, by way of summing up, it appears only in the most metaphorical book of the Bible. Though the resurrection, as has been already remarked, is distinctly alluded to in upwards of fifty portions of Scripture, there is not one solitary instance in either of

the Testaments, which directly or indirectly points to two resurrections, much less to the specific thousand years, as the period which is destined to intervene between them. But not only is there an entire abstinence in all other parts of Scripture, with this single exception, of allusion to two separate resurrections at a long interval, or any interval between them, but all the other passages, exceeding, as I have just said, fifty in number, point more or less directly to the great fact, that the resurrection of mankind will be simultaneous, and that it will occur on the last day of the world's existence.

Secondly, let me again remind Millenarians of this important fact, that—still binding them down to their own favourite mode of literal interpretation—the resurrection which they call the "first," and which they say is to be contemporaneous with the coming of Christ to reign personally on earth, would not be the first. It would be the second, for we all know that a resurrection of the saints took place at the resurrection of Christ. In the fifty-second and fifty-third verses of the twenty-seventh

chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, we read as follows, "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Here, then, was one resurrection of the saints, but as I before remarked, I have not particularly adverted to it, because our information relative to it is so very imperfect. But we who differ from the Millenarian view of these matters, have a right to meet Millenarians on their own ground, and to prove that if their own favourite theory of a literal interpretation of Scripture be applied to their hypothesis respecting a first and second resurrection, with an interval of a thousand years between them, the foundations of the Millenarian system are undermined, and the whole fabric instantly falls to the ground. If, I say again-and no Millenarian can make out even a feasible case to the contrary—there is to be a resurrection of the saints a thousand years before the resurrection of those who have died in their sins, such resurrection cannot be called "the first resurrection." It will be. and therefore it ought to be called "the second resurrection"—the first resurrection of the saints having taken place on the resurrection of our Lord.

It will not avail Millenarians to urge that the resurrection of the saints which, they say, is to take place at the coming of Christ to reign personally on earth a thousand years before the resurrection of the wicked, is to be a resurrection of all the saints who shall then be in their graves, whereas only a portion of those who slept in their graves on the resurrection of Christ are spoken of as being raised from the dead. The evangelist Matthew tells us that many of the bodies of the saints who slept arose from their graves and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. happens that, taking Millenarians on their own principles, the resurrection of saints which followed the resurrection of our Lord, can be proved to have been the resurrection of all the saints who had died up to that period. Our Millenarian friends may be startled at this mode of dealing with them; but they cannot, if they are to be consistent in their

manner of interpreting certain passages of Scripture, demur to its justice.

However much diversity of sentiment there may be among them on other points, they unanimously concur in regarding the second verse of the twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel as confirmatory of their views on the subject of a first and second resurrection, with a thousand years of interval between the two events. I have shown, I trust, in a previous part of this chapter, that not only is their notion unsupported by this passage, but that it proves just the reverse—that it is, indeed, as conclusive as language could make it, in favour of a simultaneous resurrection of all mankind, alike of the righteous and the wicked. My object is not, in reverting to the passage, to recur to that aspect of the Millenarian question, but to prove by it that if the Millenarian principle of Scriptural interpretation be applied to the passage in Matthew respecting the saints who rose from their graves immediately after the resurrection of Christ, which they apply to the passage in Daniel, the conclusion is irresistible that the saints who rose immediately after our Lord's resurrection included all the saints that had lived and died in the past history of the world, down till that moment. "Many of them," are the words of Daniel, "that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." The passage in Matthew, as before quoted, is this: "And the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints which slept arose," etc. Here, it will be observed, the word "many" is applied in both cases, in relation to the resurrection of the bodies of the saints; and in the passage in Daniel, to the resurrection of the bodies of the wicked also. Now, as I have already remarked, all Millenarians concur in the opinion, that in the passage in Daniel the word "many" means all. Otherwise they could not extract from the passage the doctrine of a general resurrection of all the saints, when, as they say, Christ is to come to reign personally on earth. But then we have a right to require from them that the word "many," as applied to the saints who rose from their graves at the time

of the Lord's resurrection, should be interpreted in the same sense. They cannot be allowed to alter the meaning of words, just as suits or does not suit their system. Applying, then, this fixed mode of interpreting terms, in the absence of any admissible ground for a deviation from it, our Millenarian brethren are bound to acquiesce in the justice of putting the construction "all" on the word "many" in the passage in Matthew. The result would be, that all the saints then in their graves rose from the sleep of death immediately after the resurrection of the dead. And if so, Millenarians cannot with propriety call the resurrection of the saints, mentioned in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, and which they affirm is to be contemporaneous with the coming of Christ to reign personally on the earth, the first resurrection. Truth requires that they call it the second resurrection; that is, provided they regard the resurrection spoken of in that part of Scripture as a literal resurrection of the bodies of the saints.

Let me now make a few observations of a

general kind on the subject of a "first resurrection." That Millenarians should feel so confident in the literality of the expression, "first resurrection," when in all the other instances in which the resurrection is referred to, there is not a single word which sanctions the notion of two resurrections at a long interval between them, -is indeed amazing. The Rev. James Inglis, in his work, entitled "The Bible Text Cyclopædia," adduces more than fifty passages of Scripture in which the resurrection of the dead is mentioned; yet there is not a single one which does not convey the idea of a simultaneous resurrection of all the dead. To the more striking of these passages I have already adverted; but there are others which, though not so express or so emphatic in their teachings in favour of a general simultaneous resurrection of the dead, cannot be regarded as other than confirmatory of that view. Jesus says, in the thirty-ninth verse of the sixth chapter of the Gospel by John, that it was his Father's will that all whom the Father had given Him should be raised up again at the last day.

Now this, beyond all question, involves the idea of a general resurrection; for, if believers, of whom our Lord here speaks, are not to be raised up till the last day, it is demonstrable that there could be no resurrection at all, either of the wicked or the righteous, after the last day. The idea of a resurrection of the unjust a thousand years after that of the just, the resurrection of the latter taking place in the last day, would be an impossibility. The same phrase of a resurrection at the last day occurs in the twenty-fourth verse of the eleventh chapter of the same gospel. In answer to the remark of our Lord, in his memorable conversation with Martha, that Lazarus should rise again from his grave, she said, "I know that he shall rise again at the last day." Now, can any one doubt that Martha here referred to the general resurrection of the dead at the end of the world? Can any Millenarian be so far wedded to his system as to suppose that Martha entertained Millenarian views respecting a first and second resurrection,—the first resurrection being that of the righteous only, and the

second that of the wicked? I have put this question to intelligent Millenarians, and none of them-knowing the ignorance of Christ's disciples on other questions of great importance—answered it in accordance with their belief that Martha was a Millenarian, and shared their distinct notions as to a first and second resurrection, with an interval of a thousand years between them. I could imagine nothing more plain than that by the expression, "I know that he"-speaking of her brother Lazarus—"shall rise at the last day," referred to the last day of this world's existence, - which is to be the day, not only of the general resurrection, but of the general judgment. And it is no less clear to my mind, that if Martha's belief in a general resurrection at the last day only, and not of a resurrection of the righteous a thousand years before that of the wicked, had been erroneous, our Lord would have corrected the misapprehension under which she laboured, by instructing her in the mysteries of Millenarianism. But Christ did nothing of the kind. He permitted her to remain in the belief that there

will be no resurrection before the last day, but that there will be a general resurrection then.

Some months—let me here parenthetically say-after I had written thus far, I met in the works of Bishop Hall the following remarks on this conversation between our Lord and Martha. They are characterized by the quaintness which so largely abounds in that Bishop's writings :- "Alas, good Martha," says Bishop Hall, ironically, "thou wert much deceived when thou said'st concerning thy brother Lazarus, 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.' Why, woman, the resurrection of that saint, thy brother, shall be a thousand years sooner than thou thoughtest of." It is gratifying to me to find that so eminent a divine as Bishop Hall should have taken the same view on this point which I have done.

But more than this, not only did our Lord allow Martha to employ the words in speaking of her brother Lazarus, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection of the last day," but He himself employs substantially the same phraseology. "This is," He says, in the thirty-

ninth verse of the sixth chapter of the same Gospel already alluded to, "this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which He hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Here it is distinctly stated by our Lord that all who believe in Him shall be raised up at the last day. In the fifty-fourth verse of the same chapter Jesus repeats the expression:-"Whoso," He says, "eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Millenarians, as I have already more than once remarked, base their system on the literal or obvious interpretation of Scripture. They are therefore bound on their own principles to accept the natural or obvious meaning of the expressions "resurrection of the last day" and "raise him up at the last day," in the cases to which I have called attention. Now, I do maintain that if ever words were employed to express a specific idea, the language in question, made use of by our Lord as well as by Martha, does point to the end of the world as usually understood, and cannot, without doing the greatest violence to the import of words, be made to convey any other idea. Had our Lord meant, as Millenarian authors assume that He did, that the resurrection to which He referred in the cases in question was to take place as the first of two resurrections, with an interval of a thousand years between them, we may rest assured that he would have employed language which would have explicitly expressed his meaning, instead of using words which, if the Millenarian interpretation of them be correct, has misled well-nigh the whole of the Church of Christ ever since they fell from his divine lips. Let me, in further illustration of the complete misinterpretation which Millenarians give of this language of our Lord, put this question to them. They admit, in common with all Christendom, that the world will come, in the literal acceptation of the term, to an end. Will they then undertake to furnish a more precise way of expressing that idea than is done in the words of our Lord, "the last But the first resurrection, they themselves admit, will take place at least a thousand years before the "last day" of the world will

occur, and consequently it could not have been to the time of that "first resurrection" that He referred. It must have been to the last day of the world, in the strictly literal meaning of the phrase, that our Lord here alluded; and if his saints are not to be raised from their graves until then, the Millenarian theory of two resurrections—the first of the righteous and the second of the wicked, after an interval of a thousand years—falls to the ground.

In the eighteenth verse of the seventeenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we are told that the Epicureans and Stoics who were among the hearers of Paul when preaching at Athens, "encountered," or opposed him, because among other doctrines which he taught was that of the resurrection from the dead. Now, it must have been a general resurrection—not a first and second resurrection—which Paul on this occasion preached. It was not to Christians that he addressed himself, and therefore it would have been out of place to have brought before the Athenians the Millenarian notion on the subject of the resurrection. That it was a general resurrection—a

simultaneous resurrection of all mankindwhich Paul preached on this occasion, is further clear from the thirty-second verse of the same chapter, where we read, "And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead some mocked, and others said, 'We will hear thee again of this matter." To the same effect are the words of the same apostle which we find in the sixth and two subsequent verses of the twenty-third chapter of the same book :-"Of the hope and resurrection of the dead," says Paul, in the sixth verse, "I am called in question." It is evident from this that it was one general resurrection, not the two resurrections with an interval of a thousand years between them, for which Millenarians contend, that the apostle of the Gentiles preached when thus addressing the Athenians.

But lest our Millenarian brethren, in their zeal to uphold their theory, should say that though Paul did not specifically allude to two resurrections—the first of the just and the second of the unjust, a period of a thousand years intervening between the two—he might nevertheless entertain their views on the sub-

ject-let me invite attention to the fifteenth verse of the twenty-fourth chapter of the same book. Paul is again the speaker. Let us listen to his words. Referring on this occasion to the Pharisees, who believed in a resurrection, and not to the Sadducees, who rejected the idea, Paul says, "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." I hold this to be as plain a statement of the fact that there will be only one simultaneous resurrection, as it would be possible to furnish, short of employing the phraseology of Millenarians. If the apostle of the Gentiles believed in and taught the doctrine of two resurrections—the first that of the just, and the second that of the unjust, the latter to take place a thousand years after the former-surely this would have been the occasion on which to give a distinct expression to his Millenarian views. But he does nothing of the kind. He simply affirms the great fact which the Pharisees believed—that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust. It is, therefore, I repeat, as plain

as anything can be, that Paul was no Millenarian. He taught nothing, he knew nothing of two distinct resurrections—one of the righteous, consisting of their bodies only, and the other of the bodies of the wicked, with an intervening period of a thousand years between them.

But I must draw my observations to a close. I do trust that I have made it sufficiently clear that the Millenarian theory of a literal or physical resurrection of the saints at the commencement of the Millennium, to be followed by another resurrection of the wicked after the lapse of the thousand years constituting that Millennium, is altogether untenable. The expressions on which it is founded occur, it is to be remembered, as before observed, not only in the most symbolical of all the books of the Bible, but in the most figurative chapter of that most figurative of books. Nor let it be forgotten, as I had occasion once before to remark, that not only does no other part of Scripture give the slightest sanction to the theory of two resurrections at an appreciable interval of time, much less at the long interval

of a thousand years, but that every passage which does speak of the resurrection of the body conveys, in terms more or less explicit, the idea of a simultaneous resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.

There is, therefore, no alternative for us but to interpret the expression "first resurrection" as it occurs in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, in a symbolical sense. And thus viewing the resurrection spoken of as signifying spiritual life, the whole thing is not only intelligible as regards that chapter, but is in accordance with other parts of Scripture in which the idea of a resurrection is involved. To one of these -namely, the well-known passage in Ezekiel-I have already alluded; but it may be right to recur to it briefly in this part of my work. Let any one read that part of the thirty-seventh chapter which relates to the prophet's vision of the valley of dry bones, and it will appear so clear as to leave no doubt on the point, that Ezekiel spoke in a purely spiritual or figurative, not in a literal sense, when he said he saw those dry bones live. It was, likewise, not in a literal, but in a symbolical sense, that the

prophet expressed himself when he said, "And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves." Need I say that the same remark is equally applicable to the language of the apostle Paul when, writing to the Romans respecting the ultimate restoration of the Jews in a spiritual as well as natural sense, he says, "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" It is obviously not to a literal, but a figurative restoration or resurrection that Paul here refers. In like manner he tells the Colossians that they had risen with Christ through the faith of the operation of God. He further says, in the opening verse of his third chapter to the church at Colosse, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The resurrections referred to in these passages are in every instance of a purely spiritual or figurative kind, not literal or physical. And if similar instances of language not literal, but figurative, regarding the resurrection of the saints are not infrequent in the Word of God, is it not logical, is it not in accordance with the dictates of reason, that the one solitary passage in Scripture in which the phrase "first resurrection" and the reign of Christ and the saints for a thousand years occur, should be interpreted in the same figurative or symbolical sense? Adopting the symbolical mode of interpretation, there are no difficulties in that part of the twentieth chapter which relates to the "first resurrection"; but adhering to a literal interpretation of the passage it cannot be satisfactorily explained at all. It is, on the contrary, directly at variance with the uniform teachings of Scripture on the subject.

CHAPTER IV.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST.

THE next aspect of the Millenarian question which, in the natural order of things, calls for our calm consideration, is the state of matters which will succeed the raising of the dead, and the taking up of the living transformed saints into the air. This feature in the Millennial system is one which, from its nature, requires to be dealt with with great care and caution,—more especially, as there is a very decided diversity of opinion in relation to it among the ablest and best men belonging to the Millenarian body.

Among Millenarians in previous periods of the history of the Christian Church, there was a near approach to unanimity in their belief that the saints, after being caught up, on the

morning of the transformation of the living, and of the resurrection of the dead, believers in Jesus would immediately return to our earth, and remain during the thousand Millennial years in our world, Christ and his Church conjointly dwelling in Jerusalem, and our Lord sitting on the throne of David, on Mount Sion, in that city, and reigning over the whole earth in association with the saints. This is still the view entertained by many of the most eminent Millenarians; but within a comparatively recent period a new light has broken in on many Millenarian minds in reference to the locality of our Lord and his saints during the Millennial period of the earth's history. Instead of Christ's own throne and the seat of the regal power of his saints, being on Mount Sion, in Jerusalem, or on the earth at all, they are to be in the New Jerusalem, which is to be a material city, suspended in the air above Jerusalem. The Church thus placed in the aërial heavens is to be the Bride of Christ, or the Lamb's Wife, mentioned in the Revelation; and when our Lord comes to call those constituting his Church to

be with Himself in the air, the marriagesupper of the Lamb will take place. Those thus taken by Christ into the air, on the occasion of his personal advent, are alone to constitute his Church through all time and through all eternity. No addition-not in one single instance-will ever be made to the Church thus in the air with her Lord, either during the Millennium or at any future period. The Church will then be complete. There will be saints on earth during the Millennium. That, indeed, is necessarily involved in the very idea of a Millennial state of the earth. And not only so, but there will be a vast preponderance of the people of God over the ungodly during the thousand years. Some Millenarians even go so far as to say, that in the Millennial period almost all, if not literally all, earth's inhabitants-of which, more hereafter-will be saints of God. Still they will not, according to the Millennial hypothesis I am unfolding, belong in any sense to the Church of Christ. That Church having been made complete at the advent of the Lord, not only can receive no additions, but no believer will have any

claim to belong, in the usual sense of the word, to the Church. The saints on earth, during the Millennial state, will be a distinct body from the glorified Church residing and reigning with Christ in the aërial heavens. And as they will be distinct, so they will be much inferior in position and privileges to the "children"—using Millennial phraseology—of the first resurrection. They will constitute the kingdom of Christ on earth, not the Church of Christ, which shall have ceased to exist on earth. And even among those constituting the saints on the Millennial earth, or the members of the Millennial kingdom, the Gentile portion will occupy a very inferior position to the Jews. The latter will be much more honoured than the former. How far these Millenarian notions are correct it will be my duty to inquire in a subsequent part of this volume. In the meantime, I content myself with the simple statement of the views held by many Millenarians on that phase of the subject. I have said that these views are held by many, but my conviction is that they are held by the great majority of the Millenarians of the present day. This is all the more strange, when it is remembered that no trace of them is to be found in the writings of the Millenarian Fathers of the second, third, and fourth centuries,—men who are, in their Millenarian capacity, held up to us by modern Millenarians as writers before whom we ought to bow down under a profound sense of our inferiority to them.

But something more of an explanatory kind is required relative to this feature of the Millenarian scheme. Though Christ and his Church, consisting of all believers in Jesus till the time of his second personal advent, will thus have their residence in the aërial heavens; they will, we are told, be visible in transcendent glory to the inhabitants of the earth. The "manifested glory" of Christ and his saints is a specially favourite Millenarian phrase. We know that nothing is impossible with God, and that consequently there could be bright and blessed manifestations to those living on earth of the glory of our Lord and his saints, from their habitations in the aërial heavens; but in the absence of any distinct

statements in the Scriptures to that effect, we are not called on to believe that such will be the case,—even assuming for the moment that the Millennial doctrine is correct, that Christ and his transformed and translated saints are destined to reside in the air during a thousand years. We read of the Lord coming to our world in the clouds, in great glory, attended by an innumerable company of angels, and by all his saints; but there is no reason to suppose that his glory, when He and they so come, will be visible to those who are then on the earth, till He and they are in close proximity to the surface of our globe.

In expressing this conviction, I am speaking in perfect accordance with a part of Scripture which Millenarians quote with, perhaps, greater frequency than any other, because they believe it gives an emphatic sanction to their system. The passage to which I allude is that in which the two angels who were present at our Lord's ascension, said to the disciples, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall

so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven."

Now it is here distinctly stated that when our Lord ascended He was visible only for a short perpendicular distance. He had not gone far up into the air before a cloud received Him out of the sight of those of his amazed and adoring disciples who were present to witness his ascension. If, then, our Lord is to come again to our earth in like manner as, more than eighteen hundred years ago, He ascended from it, the fact cannot be denied that He will only be visible to men's natural vision when He approaches the surface of the earth on the occasion of his second personal advent. On the same principle, assuming that Christ and his glorified saints are to remain for a thousand years in the air, they would not be visible to the earth's inhabitants unless their abodes were in very close proximity to the earth's surface. As men in the world's Millennial era will be flesh and blood, and the same in all essential respects as they now are, it follows of necessity that if our Lord and his saints were to be any considerable height above the

earth, they could not be visible to the inhabitants of the world. In that case, the favourite Millenarian phrase of our Lord's manifested glory during the Millennium, is one which has no foundation in Scripture.

Many Millenarians have fully felt the force of this difficulty; and it has been made more so when viewed in conjunction with their belief that our Lord is to be so near to our earth as to be visible to its inhabitants, and yet they be deprived of the privilege of having direct intercourse with Him. Millenarians know that that must be a source of unhappiness to the saints on earth. They have, therefore, conceived a theory which they think will so far obviate the difficulties to which I have referred. They say that though the saints with Christ in the air, and the righteous on the Millennial earth, will thus be in different spheres, and consequently cannot have close or continuous intercourse with each other, yet that Christ and the saints with Him in the air above, will occasionally pay-some Millenarians say daily-visits to the saints on earth below, and interchange words and offices of affection for each other. I need not name Millenarian authors who entertain this notion. That would be to transfer to my pages the names of all the Millenarian authors of any note who have identified themselves with the theory of the Lord and the risen and glorified saints residing and reigning in the air, instead of his literally sitting on David's throne in Jerusalem, and ruling over the Jews from that locality.

In relation to the theory of the glorified saints visiting, with the Lord, the saints on earth, it is right I should state that those who hold the notion assign no grounds for their belief. They quote no text for their faith. Nor is this to be wondered at, seeing there is not a solitary passage in the Word of God which gives the slightest countenance to the notion. It is pure assumption. It was a notion never dreamt of by the Millenarians of a former period. If the glorified saints, with their glorified Lord, were thus to keep up an intercourse with believers in Christ on earth by occasional visits, the fact would imply that the ministration of angels had been

superseded by that of the saints resident in the aërial heavens. The Bible in both Testaments abounds with references to the ministration of angels. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them who are the heirs of salvation?" having thus ministered to the saints on earth, while the latter are alive, they hover around believers in Christ when they are on a dying bed, in order that the moment they cease to breathe they may carry them away in safety to Abraham's bosom in heaven. Where do we read of the glorified saints thus ministering to believers in Christ on earth, and then carrying them away on their wings in triumph to the abodes of bliss in the regions above? The Scripture is altogether silent on the subject. To suppose, therefore, that the glorified saints assumed by Millenarians to be resident with Christ in the air, and coming occasionally to hold intercourse with the members of Christ's kingdom on earth, is one of the most gratuitous assumptions which I have ever met with, even in the vast domain of speculative theology.

Here let me observe that if I were a Millenarian, and believed in the personal reign of our Lord, I should not embrace the theory of his reigning in the air, and consequently only over the earth. Indeed, I cannot understand how any one who earnestly contends for the literal interpretation of Scripturewhich, as I have again and again shown all Millenarians do-can have adopted the theory of Christ's remaining in the air with his saints for the thousand Millennial years. Not only is there no single passage in Scripture which sanctions that belief, but if the statements of the Bible are to be received in their literal acceptation, they all point to the reign of Christ as being in Jerusalem, and on the throne of David. The only portion of the New Testament which may be so strained as to be made to countenance the aërial hypothesis, is that in which Paul says that the saints raised from their graves, and the living saints transformed and glorified, shall be caught up together to meet their Lord in the air, and that so they shall be ever with the Lord. But Paul does not say that they shall

be ever with the Lord in the air. If, indeed, they were to be ever with the Lord in the air, then neither Christ nor they could have their final home either in heaven—in the sense in which we understand the word to denote some particular place—or in our regenerated world, which many excellent, though, I think grievously mistaken, Christians believe will be the eternal dwelling-place of all God's saints when the present earth has been burnt up.

I would wish here to say with all calmness, and after due consideration, in concluding my reference to this point, that the notion of Christ and the glorified saints, who are with Him in the air, paying occasional visits to the earth, and having friendly intercourse with the righteous who are in it,—is one of the most fanciful notions within the area of the Millenarian system,—abundant in fanciful ideas as I regard that system to be. I know not, as has been already remarked, of a single text of Scripture, which, if carefully examined, affords the slightest support to it. And while there are no portions of Scripture which, so far as I know, give even a seeming sanction

to the notion, Reason comes forward and energetically raises her voice against it. The very nature of the two classes of saints is so opposite that we cannot comprehend in what way they could carry on intercourse together. The saints with Christ in the air are clothed in glorious and immortal bodies, like unto the glorious and immortal body of Christ Himself; while the saints in the Millennial earth will have precisely the same bodies as we now have,-bodies in which the seeds of corruption and sickness are so thickly sown, that they will sooner or later bring all the world's inhabitants to death and to the house appointed for all living. What sympathy or fellowship could there be between two classes of beings so very differently constituted in every way?

Have those who so strenuously and confidently advocate the theory of Christ and his saints reigning in the air during the Millennial thousand years, and enjoying not only while the Millennium lasts, but through all eternity, the exclusive privilege of constituting the Church of Christ, with all its glory and bliss—have they carefully weighed the conse-

quences of their Millennial creed? Hitherto there has been a remarkable carnestness and unanimity among Millenarians in expatiating on the great privilege, because of the blessedness, of dwelling in the world during the Millennial period of its history; but if all the righteous who shall be on the earth while it is in its Millennial state, shall be thereby shut out from being members of Christ's Church, and be in a far inferior position among God's people through all eternity than those believers in Jesus who lived before the personal advent of the Lord-it is plain that the saints of the Millennial period will have cause to lament that they were not born previous to the ushering in of the Millennial era. The same course of reasoning inevitably conducts to the conclusion that we who are believers in Christ in the present dispensation, and who will consequently constitute his Church, not only during the Millennium, but throughout eternity, have cause to adore the riches of God's grace in appointing us our lot under this dispensation of grace, instead of having, in his eternal purpose, fixed the time of our earthly

existence during the Millennial period of the world's history.

The other Millenarian theory relative to the reign of Christ and his Bride, which means his glorified Church over the earth, is that Christ and his glorified saints shall reign on Mount Sion in Jerusalem, whence they will give laws to the whole earth, and carry out practically that course of legislation which they deem best adapted to conduce to the happiness of those who are resident in the Millennial world. Christ and his saints are to be visible while thus carrying on the government of the earth in its Millennial state. This belief in the visibility of our Lord when He is seated on the throne of David in Jerusalem, is one which is at variance with all our ordinary notions of things. Of course that would not furnish ground for rejecting it could any Scripture be adduced in its favour. But I know of none, not a single passage, which, rightly understood, warrants the theory that our Lord and his Church will, when reigning in Jerusalem, be visible to the earth's inhabitants.

By the eye of faith those who are Christ's can clearly discern their glorious Lord, no matter in what part of the world Providence may have cast their lot. Faith sees things which are invisible to the eye of sense. But the reign of Christ is, according to Millenarianism, to be literally a personal reign. His human nature is to be as visible to the natural eye as any earthly or material object is at present to our visual organs. And as Christ is to be permanently seated on the throne of David in Jerusalem, it is plain, beyond all question, that those only who reside in that locality, or who come from a distance for the purpose, can have the happiness of seeing Him in his human nature. As many parts of the habitable world are thousands of miles-across seas, oceans, and continents-distant from Jerusalem, there must be very many millions of earth's inhabitants alive whose eyes will never enjoy the soul-gladdening sight of the person of their Lord occupying the throne of David, and reigning supreme over the earth from the central seat of his sovereignty in Jerusalem. Regarded as God, Jesus is necessarily present everywhere at one and the same moment; but it is not in his purely divine capacity that Millenarians regard our Lord as reigning on earth. His reign is to be distinctly and properly personal. He is to be visible in his human form. That, indeed, is one of the fundamental principles of Millenarianism. Without it the whole system would crumble into dust. Now I feel satisfied that I have done everything, short of absolutely demonstrating my proposition, that on neither of the theories to which I have been adverting in relation to the locality of Christ and his saints during their supposed Millennial reign, could Christ be visible personally to more than a very few, one out of many millions of earth's inhabitants. It therefore follows that those Millenarians who regard the visibility of Christ's person while reigning in our world as that which will constitute the chief element in its Millennial glory and bliss, are labouring under a great misconception. Taking the statements of Scripture in accordance with the Millenarian principle of a literal interpretation, nothing, to my mind-assuming, for the sake of argument, that Christ is to reign personally over the earth—could be more clear than that He is to remain personally on the earth during the thousand years of his reign, and that the throne on which He is to sit is to be the throne of his father David, the seat of which was in Jerusalem. I need not quote passages from prophetic Scripture in proof of this. Every reader of his Bible will, in his own mind, recur to a variety of passages to the effect that Christ is to reign—personally, according to Millenarians—on Mount Sion in Jerusalem.

I may here observe that very recently a new Millenarian theory has been advanced in connection with the locality of the central seat of our Lord's regal supremacy when He comes to reign personally over our world. I do not suppose that this new theory has made much progress; for I have not seen it advocated in any Millenarian publications. It is not, however, without its advocates. The gentleman who brought it under my notice is a firm believer in it, and no man at the present hour holds a higher place than he does in the reli-

gious world. His praise is eminently in all the churches. Were I at liberty to give his name, it would at once command attention; but as the conversation in the course of which this distinguished servant of Christ developed this new feature in Millenarianism was private, I do not feel justified in making mention of his name. His view with regard to the locality of our Lord's personal presence during the Millennial state of the earth is this-that He will remain in the air, directly above Jerusalem, during the thousand years, with his resurrection saints, called the Church in contradistinction from the saints on earth, who will be called the members of Christ's kingdom, and that David himself will occupy a throne of transcendent glory on Mount Sion as the vicegerent of Christ, not acting independently, as he did when he reigned in Jerusalem nearly three thousand years ago, but in accordance with the specific instructions on all important points which he will receive from the Lord. Christ, we are further told, will often personally visit David sitting on his throne on Mount Sion, for the purpose of making known to him

his sovereign will relative to the government of the world.

It is proper I should here remark that the eminent Christian to whom I allude divides those who shall be saved into three classes. First, there will be in the Millennial state the saints who are with the Lord in the air; secondly, the Jows reigned over in Jerusalem by David; and thirdly, Christians belonging to the Gentile nations, who are to be inferior both as regards their secular position and their spiritual privileges to the Jews then in their converted state. But in what specific respect the inferiority of the Gentile Christians to the Jewish believers in Christ is to consist, my Millenarian interlocutor did not explain. It is right I should add, that unlike all other Millenarians with whom I am acquainted, either personally or through their writings, he believes that the Millennium, instead of only lasting for a thousand years, is to be eternal, and that the distinction which I have mentioned as destined to exist between the three classes of the saved will also be eternal. The Rev. Dr. Meikle, of Dumfriesshire, in

Scotland, has, within the last twelve months, published a work entitled "Coming Events," in favour of the personal reign of Christ on earth, in which he advances the theory that the Millennium will last three hundred and sixty thousand years. He grounds his belief in this, partly on the triumph which Christ would thereby achieve over Satan, by making the number of the saved vastly greater than the number of the lost, and partly on the expression in Peter that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years; so that three hundred and sixty days-of which the Jewish year consisted -according to our meaning of the word day, would, in the Lord's acceptation of the term, be equivalent to three hundred and sixty thousand years. Dr. Adam Clarke, who was no Millenarian in the sense of the personal reign of Christ on the earth, but who believed in the Millennium in the sense of holiness and happiness becoming prevalent in the world, held the same view as Dr. Meikle, only that taking each year to consist of the same number of days as at present, he made the duration of the Millennium to be three hundred and sixty-five

thousand years instead of three hundred and sixty thousand. But this prolonged duration of the Millennium even to this very extended term would be, in relation to eternity, less than even the "little moment" of which the Scriptures speak.

My Millenarian friend, I ought to mention, simply stated his opinions on these points, without giving in detail the Scriptural grounds on which he rested them; but his views were so new to me, and seemed so devoid of support from the Word of God, that I afterwards applied myself to a consideration of his theory, especially as relates to the reign of the risen David in Jerusalem. The result of my investigation is that there are portions of Scripture which give so much seeming countenance to the theory of David's personally reigning during the Millennium in Jerusalem, as to place those holding the principle of a uniform literal interpretation in no inconsiderable difficulty. Jeremiah, speaking of the people of Israel, says, "They shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them." Ezekiel also, speaking of the

Jews, expresses himself in these words, "And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them. I the Lord have spoken it." The same prophet in another chapter, namely, the thirty-seventh, and in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth verses, says, "And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt, and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." Now I repeat that no Millenarian believing in the literal interpretation principle, which is avowedly the basis of his system, can, consistently with that principle, withhold his concurrence from the theory of the gentleman alluded to-that David is destined to be the actual visible king of the Jews, raised up specially by God for the purpose, after their restoration to their own land. As my principles do not impose on me the

obligation of receiving the above passage in a literal sense, they do not present any difficulty to my mind. It is said that the Jews and their children's children are to dwell in Judea for ever, and that David is to be their prince for ever. These two statements cannot, we know, be both literally true, because the Millennium during which David is represented as reigning in Jerusalem is only to last for a thousand years, when it is to be succeeded by another and entirely different state of things. And if the literal principle cannot here be applied in reference to the perpetuity, or rather I should say the eternity, of David's reign over the Jews, so I feel that I am not called on to believe in the fact, in a literal sense, of David's being raised up during the Millennial reign personally on the earth at all. It is different with the Millenarians. They are bound to believe, from the passages I have quoted, that David will actually be the king of the Jews not only during the Millennium, but for ever and ever.

I have said what may be deemed sufficient, I suppose, to prove from the passages of Scripture which I have quoted, that the literal prin-

ciple of interpretation cannot be applied, so far as they are concerned. But I attach so much importance to the passages in question, as bearing directly on the whole of the Millenarian system, that I bespeak the reader's indulgence while I make a few further observations on those portions of Scripture. I repeat, that on their own principles, Millenarians are bound to believe in the literal truthfulness of those parts of the Bible which so explicitly and emphatically assert that when Christ comes again -in their view of his second advent-He will reign over Jerusalem, on the throne of his father David, for ever and ever. Assuming then that this will be the case, our Lord, when He descends from heaven, will never return to it again. The moment He quits the celestial world, He will have bid a final farewell to all the glories of the heavenly state. That is a demonstrable fact, if He is to reign over the house of Jacob in Jerusalem for ever and ever. Are our Millenarian friends prepared to accept the logical consequence, in this instance, of their literal interpretation principle? I know that many of their number will recoil at the thought. Still they cannot escape from this result of their system, if they adhere to the principle of a literal interpretation of the Word of God.

Then there is the fact that similar language is applied in various parts of the Scriptures to David. We have seen that nothing could be more plain, nothing more emphatic, than the declaration that David will, during the Millennial period, sit on what was, three thousand years ago, his own throne in Jerusalem, and reign over the Jews for ever and ever. Millenarians, according to their literal interpretation principle, are under equally solemn obligations in this case as in the case of our Lord, to believe that David is actually, on the ushering in of the Millennial state, to be raised, after emerging from his grave, to the dignity of king, and to reign in Jerusalem, over the house of Jacob, for ever and ever. Now the two statements cannot be literally true. Christ cannot sit on David's throne in Jerusalem, in the character of king of the Jews, and David also. That would be to have two kings sitting at the same time on the same throne. Yet Millenarians, on their system, are bound equally to believe in both declarations.

Let me carnestly entreat believers in the personal reign of Christ, to calmly consider what I have here said. Let them fairly face the difficulty. I can conceive of no amount of ingenuity that would suffice to get them out of the dilemma in which they are placed. The assertions are just as explicit and emphatic that, during the Millennium, David will sit on his own former throne in Jerusalem, and reign there for ever and ever, as they are in relation to our Lord's sitting on the throne of his father David, in Jerusalem, and reigning there for ever and ever.

That it cannot be literally true that David will reign personally in Jerusalem over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, is placed beyond all question, inasmuch as he will be one of the saints raised from their graves in glorious bodies on the advent of Christ, and caught up to meet the Lord in the air, to be for ever where He is. His reigning over the Jews in Jerusalem, they all being flesh and blood, just as mankind now are, necessarily

implies that He should have a body like unto the bodies of his subjects. The logical conclusion therefore is, that as the passages in question relative to David's reigning in Jerusalem over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, cannot be literally true, so neither can the same language when applied to our Lord's personally reigning in Jerusalem for ever and ever, have any claim to be regarded as literally true. We anti-Millenarians, who look on the language in question, both as relates to David and our Lord, as figurative or spiritual, see no difficulty in reconciling the passages with each other.

Some Millenarians, seeing that there is no other way of getting out of the difficulty in which the passages alluded to place them, resort to the assumption that as Christ is in some other parts of Scripture alluded to under the name of David, the reference in those passages must be to our Lord. This is a convenient assumption, but supposing it to be well grounded, are Millenarians, let me ask, prepared for the consequences? Do they not see the result to which it necessarily leads

them? Do they not see that such a way of escape from the difficulty inevitably involves the renunciation of their literal interpretation principle? The exigencies of their system require that they should spiritualize the passages quoted, although they are so vehement in their condemnation of us anti-Millenarians when we put a figurative or spiritual construction on any portion of Scripture which they regard as giving a sanction to their views. But it is clear to moral demonstration that in this instance it is the literal David, not Christ, that is spoken of; for it is said that God would "raise up" his servant David. Now this could not be said of Christ. He was raised up when He came into the world to be our Saviour, and He was raised up from the dead; but the phrase "raise up" can never more be applied to Him. He is now on his Father's throne in heaven, whence He will, when He comes again into our world, descend in transcendent glory, instead of being raised up, in any sense in which the words can be legitimately used.

Lest some Millenarians should still remain unconvinced of the fact that the passages to

which I have referred respecting Christ's sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and David himself being destined to re-occupy the throne on which he sat three thousand years ago, do not admit of a literal construction, let me ask their serious and unbiassed attention to a quotation, as bearing on the point, from the book of Jeremiah. The verse in question appears to my mind to constitute evidence so strong as to be scarcely less than moral demonstration, that neither what is said of Christ personally reigning in the Millennial period in Jerusalem-David's throne being the seat of his regal power and glory-or of David being raised up to re-occupy his own throne, can be viewed in a literal light.

Speaking of some future period—for at the time Jeremiah wrote the dynasty of David had ceased to exist—the prophet thus expresses himself in the thirteenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of his book: "Thus saith the Lord, Behold I will fill all the inhabitants of this land, even the kings that sit upon David's throne, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, with drunken-

ness." So that if this passage be literally rendered, a time is to come-for it has not yet come, inasmuch as since Jeremiah wrote, there has been no throne of David-when kings. given up to habits of drunkenness shall sit on the throne of David, and that all their subjects will be equally addicted to habits of inebriety. Millenarians cannot, with the least regard to consistency, claim from us the concession that the portions of Scripture which speak of Christ, or David himself, sitting on David's throne, are to be understood in a literal sense, and yet that the passage I have just quoted about drunken kings sitting on David's throne, should not be construed in a literal sense. Either all or none must be received literally. It is an established fact that, while this yerse was written by Jeremiah in the year 599 before Christ, immediately thereafter the dynasty of the house of David ceased to exist; and we all know, as just remarked, that from that day till this no one has occupied the throne of David, and that, consequently, the expression, "The kings that sit upon David's throne," if viewed in its strictly

literal sense, remains unconfirmed by the fact until this day. The same may be said with regard to the statement that "the inhabitants of this land "-namely, Judea, and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem-" should be filled with drunkenness." That has never proved literally the fact, and it may be safely said never will. Neither is there any ground for accepting literally what is said respecting David's occupying his own throne in Jerusalem, or Christ's personally sitting on the throne of David in that city. There is a sense in which what the prophet has said was true, though we may not be able to speak with certainty as to what that sense is. And so with regard to many other passages in Scripture on which Millenarians put a literal construction, and then quote in favour of their own views. The question may be asked, if, then, our Lord is not destined ever to sit literally on the throne of his father David, will the promises made in various parts of the Old Testament, that Christ should sit on the throne of David, fail to be fulfilled? Assuredly not. Far be from me any such idea. They have indeed already received their accomplishment, only in the spiritual, not the literal acceptation of the words. This is distinctly stated in the second chapter of the Acts, in Peter's memorable address on the occasion of the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit's influences. 'The Apostle, in relation to this point, expressed himself as follows: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne: He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whercof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right

hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Here we are told that God had sworn with an oath to raise up of the fruit of David's body to sit upon his throne, and then, it is added, that this raising up of Christ to sit on David's throne referred to the resurrection of Christ, of the fulfilment of which promise so to raise up Christ, Peter had been, with other apostles and disciples, witnesses. "Therefore," continues the apostle, "being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." Nothing could be more plain from this passage than the fact, that the promise that Christ should sit on the throne of David was fulfilled when God raised Him from the dead and set Him on his own right hand in heaven. What language, indeed, could be more explicit than that of Peter as to Christ's receiving his kingdom when He ascended up into heaven, when he says,

"Know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified both Lord and Christ." The word Lord is here synonymous with king. So that in this portion of Scripture we have the fact clearly stated that Christ was, on his ascension into heaven, made by God mediatorially a King; for as God, He had been a King from all eternity.

Here, then, we have a remarkable instance, placed beyond all doubt, of the promise that Christ should sit on the throne of David being fulfilled, though only in a spiritual, or figurative, not in a literal sense. I would earnestly commend this portion of the Word of God to the prayerful consideration of those Millenarians who strenuously insist on a uniform literal interpretation of Scripture. If they would only thus carefully and solemnly reconsider this feature of their system, I feel assured that the result would be a modification of their views with regard to many portions of the Bible in which, at present, they conceive they discern the most decided Millenarianism. But, while nearly all Millenarians are in perfect

accord in relation to their belief that Christ will literally sit on the throne of David in Jerusalem during the Millennium, there are some of their number who actually affirm that even after our Lord is represented in Scripture as having at the end of all things delivered up his mediatorial kingdom to the Father, He will sit on the throne of David through all eternity. Not content with assigning to Christ David's throne on earth, they provide for Him a literal throne of David in heaven.

The Millenarian of greatest note who hazards this extraordinary notion is Mr. Birks. In his "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," this very able writer—but one whose flights into the region of speculative theology are much too frequent—expresses himself on the point in question in the following terms:—
"The dominion of God in heaven, from the beginning, has been the reign of the Father and the Son, by the Spirit, in perfect unity of divine perfection, but also with a public subordination of the Son to the Father, who is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, the image of the invisible God.

When the work of redemption is complete, the character of the kingdom of God over his ransomed creation must be the very same. Hence, as soon as the work of subjugation is complete, when all enemies have been put under the feet of Christ, and the whole universe owns Him to be the First and the Last, the Head and Lord of creation, He will by a solemn act, before the whole universe, profess his own subordination to the eternal Father. Thenceforward it will be the perfected kingdom of God and of Christ. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be set up for ever. Christ, as the Son of man, shall sit on the throne of David, and be a perpetual worshipper; while, as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, He will perpetually share with his Father the homage of the universe, that God may be all in all."

The italics are mine. To me it appears that there is not only a lamentable confusion of ideas in the language here quoted, but that the ideas which that language is meant to convey is fearfully at variance with Scripture, and most dishonouring to Christ. The

natural inference from the first part of the quotation would be, that in heaven, and from all eternity, the Son was subordinate to the Father. If this was so, the co-equality of Christ with God is a doctrine which is without foundation in the Bible. But I will not pause—not even for a moment—for the purpose of pointing out the variance of this notion with Scripture, or the dishonour which it puts upon our Lord.

With regard to Christ's "professing his subordination to the eternal Father" when He has accomplished his work of subjugation of all things to Himself, Mr. Birks fails to make a most important qualification in the language he employs. It is true that our Lord will proclaim before the whole universe, when He has put all things under his feet, and destroyed the last enemy, which is death, his surrender of the kingdom to the Father; but this public act of subordination to the Father will only be performed in his capacity of mediator. He will then deliver up his mediatorial kingdom to God the Father, that God may be all in all. But Christ Himself, instead

of being subordinate to the Father, after this transfer of his mediatorial kingdom, will, as God, be Himself, co-equally with the Father, "all in all" throughout eternity. It was only when our Lord assumed our nature, and came on earth in the character of our substitute, to suffer and die for sinners, that He subordinated Himself to the Father; and that subordination will only last until He has subdued all things to Himself, and accomplished, as our mediator, the work of redemption in the case of all that were given to Him of the Father from before the foundation of the world. Then his mediatorial functions will cease, and contemporaneously with that there will be the delivering up of his mediatorial kingdom to God the Father. From that moment Christ will be through all the eternity which is to come, as He was through all the eternity that is passed, in every respect on a footing of perfect equality with God. Even Mr. Birks himself, with a marvellous inconsistency, in effect admits, in his very next sentence, the correctness of all I have stated; for he says-"Thenceforward it will be the

perfected kingdom of God and Christ." If, then, the kingdom be as much that of Christ as of God, what comes of Mr. Birks' doctrine of the subordination of the Son "to the eternal Father."

It can hardly be necessary after this to say a single word in disproof of Mr. Birks' startling assertion, that in heaven Christ will sit on the throne of David, and be a perpetual worshipper. If Christ Himself be co-equal with the Father, how can He worship the Father? Mr. Birks might with equal propriety represent the Father as worshipping the Son. Besides, if our Lord is to be Himself a worshipper, how could angels and the spirits of the just made perfect worship Him? Yet we know that God and Christ will, through all eternity, as now, sit on the same throne, exercising co-ordinate power, possessing the same glory, and receiving unitedly and equally the same universal and unceasing ascriptions of praise, and honour, and glory. How above all, if Christ is Himself to be a worshipper in heaven, are all heaven's inhabitants represented as uniting in one grand

chorus in their ascriptions of praise, and honour, and glory to Him, saying, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever." I reiterate this argument because I feel it is unanswerable, and not only is subversive of this notion of Mr. Birks, but vindicates the proper divinity of our Lord from a statement which I regard, in effect, though not so intended, as calculated to inspire doubts as to the perfect and co-cternal equality of the Son with the Father.

CHAPTER V.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN OF CHRIST.

(Continued.)

MULENARIANS are unanimous in their conviction that the risen and glorified saints resident with Christ will also, conjointly with Him, reign over the earth. There is, as I have shown, great diversity among them as to the mode or form in which the members of the Church, whether remaining in the aërial heavens or reigning on the earth, will exercise their authority; but there is none as to the fact itself. In order that the reader may see the Millenarian belief on this point, as expressed in Millenarian language, I will quote from "The Last Vials," written by Mr. Purdon, and indorsed and adopted, among many other Millenarians of note, by the Rev. M. Baxter, author of "Louis Napoleon the

destined Monarch of the World." Before I make my quotation, I ought to mention, in justice to Mr. Purdon, who is a minister of the gospel at Torquay, that several years before there seemed the slightest probability, in the world's view, that either Louis Napoleon, or any other branch of the Bonaparte family would ever acquire supreme power in the government of France, he predicted with great confidence that a third Napoleon would arise, and become the most powerful monarch of modern times, and maintained that he would be the Antichrist predicted in Scripture, as destined to appear in the world. Mr. Purdon, as far back as the year 1845, commenced a monthly serial, under the title of "The Last Vials," with the view of advocating his peculiar opinions on that subject. From that day to this, Mr. Pardon has zealously, consistently, and ably laboured to prove that Louis Napoleon is the Antichrist of Scripture. To his theory on this point I shall take occasion to refer in another part of this volume. Just now, after these few words of prefatory explanation, I will simply transfer to my pages a few of the numerous observations which he makes on the subject of the reign of the glorified saints over our world during the Millennial period of its history. Mr. Purdon says:-" When our Lord sets up his kingdom, He will divide its provinces among its saints, and will make them literally rulers over the whole world. He will Himself be the paramount Sovereign; but as all his saints are said to be one with Him, they must necessarily take part with Him in his sovereignty. The world will be divided into departments in the council-chamber of heaven, and each saint, according to his works, will be advanced to a corresponding rank in this heavenly government, and will rule over five or ten citiesover a larger or a lesser province. What extraordinary light is thrown by this means upon the promises of the book of Revelation! 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in my throne. He that overcometh, and keepeth my words unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron.' If, then, we admit the reign of Christ-if we believe that the

nations of the earth will be divided among the saints—that each of them shall have some province made subject to his care—that he shall live with Christ in the heavenly city, and come down in his immortal body, visible or invisible, to encourage the righteous-to restrain the wicked—to regulate the world—to bring all things in subjection to the obedience of Christ—to be the dispenser of God's judgments and of his favours to mankind-to administer an authority which cannot be resisted, and to possess a dignity which cannot be impaired; -if we believe that the meanest saint, who now labours for his bread, may reach to so high an elevation, then we shall understand the force and truth of those promises: 'He shall sit with Me in my throne. I will give him power over the nations.' And we shall comprehend the fitness of that new and lofty song which was sung by the redeemed around the throne: 'Thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

Millenarians, with very rare exceptions, refuse to admit that there are any difficulties in their system. I have only met with one who, while firmly adhering to his Millenarian notions, frankly admitted that there are difficulties. I see what appears to me insuperable difficulties in the theory developed by Mr. Purdon in the above extract, but I have no idea that he will see any. All, I doubt not, appears to him asplain as those other portions of Scripture regarding which there is a universal concurrence of belief among evangelical Christians. But though I have no hope of convincing of their errors either Mr. Purdon or Mr. Baxter, who makes the above extract as much his own as if the passage had proceeded from his pen, I may be made the means of preventing others from adopting so mistaken a view of that part of God's Word on which it professes to be founded. Let me, then, call attention to the fact, that in various other parts of his Millenarian writings, Mr. Purdon pictures, with an appalling vividness, the terrible judgments which are to be inflicted on an ungodly world, contemporaneously with

the advent of our Lord. So general and destructive are these judgments to be at the beginning of the Millennium, that comparatively few will be left on the earth. The words of Paul are quoted, where he says that the Lord, when He comes, will do so in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God. And as all Millenarians admit that iniquity will prevail in the world when our Lord comes, to such an extent, as that the question may be asked, "Will He find faith on the earth?" it must be obvious that there will be but few indeed of the inhabitants of the world over whom the glorified saints can reign.

We may go further still. If the language of Jude is to be taken literally—and Millenarians are bound to accept it in that sense—there will be no ungodly inhabitants of the earth left upon it; for that prophet says that when the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints it will be "to execute judgment on all" the ungodly. As I have shown in the second volume of this work, "The End of All Things," I regard this reference by Jude to

the second coming of our Lord, as made to his coming to the general judgment of mankind. But I will, for argument's sake, concede to Millenarians, for the moment, that the passage relates to the coming of Christ to set up his Millennial kingdom on earth. Where then, let me ask, seeing that nearly all the ungodly are to be destroyed, and all the saints alive at the time to be caught up into the air-where are the subjects to be found over whom the glorified saints are to reign? The provinces which Mr. Purdon assigns to the saints—each saint being a prince over a province—will be so thinly populated, if they are to have any population at all, that the saints will be sovereigns without subjects.

But there is another way in which may be shown, in connection with this alleged reigning of the saints in the Millennial period of the earth, the lamentable lengths, in opposition alike to reason and to Scripture to which men may go who have become wedded to some particular theory. It is not for any one to presume to name the number of saints at the time of Christ's second advent, but we are told it will

consist of a multitude so great that it cannot be numbered. The number of those redeemed from among all nations by the blood of Christ from the death of righteous Abel till our Lord shall come again, may surely be assumed to be much greater than will be the number of the godless population that will be on the earth when our Lord revisits our world. On that supposition therefore—even were none of the earth's ungodly inhabitants to be destroyed—there would not be found a single subject for each of the saints made a sovereign, or king, by our Lord.

It will be inferred from what I have said that the most glowing feature of the Millennium in association with the personal presence of our Lord on earth will, in the view of Millenarians, be the fact of his reigning over all the earth. I need not transfer to my pages the copious quotations from Scripture which they bring forward to prove that Christ will reign on the earth. I admit the conclusiveness of them all. The difference between Millenarians and myself is this—that they represent the various passages alluded to as establishing

the fact that the government of Christ will be a government administered in connection with his personal presence in our world, while I maintain that the affairs of the world will be administered from off that throne in glory, on which He is now seated. And here I would seck to impress on the minds of my readers, in opposition to the views of Millenarians who speak as if Christ had not at present a throne or kingdom, and consequently does not now reign—that He does reign, and is at this moment king over the whole earth. Even if Scripture were silent on this point the inference that our Lord reigns on earth would be conclusively clear from what is said of Him in other respects. He is declared to be the Maker of the world. By Him, we are told, the heavens and the earth and all things were made. And if He be the Maker of the world, is it probable, is it even possible, that He should not also be its Monarch. Does it accord with the dictates of reason that our Lord having made the world should leave it to govern itself, or as some say, to be governed by chance? And if He reigns over all the inhabitants of the earth, it is manifest that He must also reign over his disciples, who constitute his Church.

But we are not left on this point to the deductions of reason. The Scripture is equally copious, clear, and conclusive in its enunciations of the great truth that the Lord reigns. Zechariah predicted that during his public ministry on earth He would appear in his kingly character:-"Rejoice," says that prophet, "O daughter of Zion, shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, behold, thy king cometh unto thee." Had Zechariah ended here, Millenarians of every variety of faith on other points in their system, would have maintained that he had alone in his eyes the coming of Christ personally to establish an earthly throne on Mount Sion, in Jerusalem. But the prophet adds, "He is just, having salvation, lowly, and riding on an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Nothing could be more clear from the language here employed than that the Lord Jesus, even in the days of his deepest humility, when on earth, was King over Israel. But the fulfilment of the prediction as recorded at Jerusalem, in the twenty-first chapter of the Gospel by Matthew, puts it out of the power of Millenarians to apply the language of Zechariah to the second personal advent of our Lord. Besides, Christ Himself repeatedly acknowledged Himself to be a king. When arraigned before Pilate one of the charges preferred against Him was that He claimed to be a king, and when Pilate put the question to Him, whether this was so or not, Christ answered him in such a way as was equivalent to an affirmation of the fact that He was a king.

The circumstance which led Pilate to put the question to our Lord was Christ's own declaration immediately previous to this that his kingdom was not of this world. "My kingdom," said He, "is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto Him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the

truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." It must strike every reader as the common-sense meaning of this passage that Christ was, while He thus stood before the bar of Pilate, a king and had a kingdom. He repeats the phrase, "My kingdom," in no fewer than three instances, and in as many sentences. Yet Millenarians tell us that He had not then a kingdom, has not now, and will not have till his personal return to our earth.

The passage of Scripture which Millenarians quote most frequently, and with greatest emphasis, in favour of their theory that Christ has not as yet a kingdom, is the one in which the parable of the nobleman going into a far country to receive a kingdom was spoken by our Lord; but to my mind that parable, so far from being favourable to their theory, is just the reverse. I maintain that it is subversive of their hypothesis, that it is the Lord's return to set up his Millennial reign in this world, that is typified by this parable. The nobleman, we are told, received his kingdom on reaching the far country; and it is clear that

having received it he returned to those servants to whom he had confided important trusts. That he did so forthwith on receiving his kingdom is evident, for he went to the far country with that view. His own language is that he went to receive the kingdom "and to return." The latter phrase is important as rendering the meaning of the parable evident. He did spiritually return, as was proved by the effects of his spiritual presence on the day of Pentecost, which was "not many days" from the time of his arriving in the far country, the time at which He received his mediatorial kingdom. Accept the Millenarian interpretation of the parable, and our Lord has not yet received, or at all events has not yet taken possession of his mediatorial kingdom, although since his arrival in "the far country to receive for Himself a kingdom," the prolonged interval of nearly two thousand years has occurred: And to make the thing more anomalous still, though nearly two thousand years have thus elapsed since Christ went to receive his kingdom without his having manifested the fact that He did receive it, they only promise Him a thousand years' possession of it when He does receive it; in other words, not much more than half the period of time which has intervened since He went to receive it. No: our Lord received his kingdom the very moment He reached the realms of bliss after his resurrection from the dead. He received it at the hands of his Father, as a reward for his having finished the atoning work which God had given Him to do.

In addition then to the fact of Christ being a king in the sense of administering the general affairs of the world, He is no less a king in the sense of mediatorial sovereignty. "All power," He says Himself, "is given to Me in heaven and earth." If then He possesses all power in heaven and earth, is there not something exceedingly feeble in the attempt to show, which all Millenarians do, that Christ does not yet sit on his own throne, but on that of his Father, and that He does not yet possess a kingdom?

Need I further quote Scripture in proof of the fact that Christ took possession of his mediatorial kingdom when He ascended up on

high, and that He now reigns over that kingdom? I might fill pages with Scripture proofs that He now sustains the kingly office, and fulfils all the functions appertaining to it. But a few texts will suffice. "This man," we are told in the twelfth and thirteenth verses of the tenth chapter of the Hebrews, "this man for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians thus speaks of the present reign or sovereignty of our Lord, "God set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church." Again, says the same apostle, in his Epistle to the Philippians, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow." The apostle Peter, too, says regarding Christ, "Who is gone into heaven,

and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him." It will, too, be remembered that in the interesting conversation which Nathanael had with our Lord, in the days of his earthly sojourn, Nathanael addressed Him in these words:-" Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God: Thou art the King of Israel;" not "Thou wilt hereafter be King of Israel, but Thou art the King of Israel." And Christ, as we all know, did not repudiate, but acquiesced in the propriety of the title. On another memorable occasion, that on which He made a triumphant entry into Jerusalem, the multitude who joined in the procession exclaimed, "Hosanna! blessed is the King of Israel, who cometh in the name of the Lord," That Christ is now King, and was when He tabernacled in our world, is further proved, as before observed, by his own words, when He said, "My kingdom is not of this world,"-language which explicitly asserts that He had then a kingdom, and consequently must have been a king. As a further proof of the fact that our Lord is now a king and has a kingdom, I would invite attention to the prayer which the thief on the cross addressed to Christ-"Lord," said the prisoner, "remember me when Thou comest into thy kingdom." It is true that these latter quotations do not refer to the manifested mediatorial kingdom of Christ, but they are all no less true when viewed in connection with our Lord's appointment to that kingdom in the eternal purpose of God.

It is evident therefore that, in addition to his being King over all the earth, our Lord has spiritual subjects constituting his Church, over whom He exercises a supreme sovereignty. Every believer acknowledges Jesus to be his King in a spiritual sense, as well as in the sense of his being King of kings, and Lord of lords. When Christ therefore comes—even assuming that He is to come personally in the Millenarian acceptation of the word—He will not come to establish for the first time a kingdom in the world: He will only come to enlarge the boundaries of a kingdom already existing, and to increase to a wonderful extent the number of his subjects.

In that sense Christ's kingdom will come;

for it will be established in lands and among nations where it was before unknown. had an exemplification of this at the time of the Reformation; and we have new illustrations of it in every revival of real religion which takes place in our own day. But as we all know that Christ did not come personally to our world at the time of the Reformation, nor in any of those revivals of vital godliness which the world has witnessed during the present or any preceding century; so in like manner the kingdoms of this world can become and will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, without the personal return of our Lord being necessary for the accomplishment of the change. All that will be required to bring the great bulk of mankind to the feet of Jesus, and to the acknowledgment of his sovereignty, is the universal spread of gospel principles, and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit's influences to render effectual the means of grace thus abundantly enjoyed. Christ will then reign really, and not merely in a nominal sense, from sea to sea, and from the river to the end of the earth; whereas He

only now reigns in the spiritual acceptation of the term, over a comparatively limited part of the world. The prediction of Zechariah that the Lord shall be King over all the earth, will then be verified to an extent which will constitute a glorious contrast to the limited sense in which it is true that the Lord reigns at the present time.

And here it is of importance that I should make the fact clear to the mind of every reader of this volume, that the Lord Jesus Christ not only reigns as God, having a co-equal sovereignty with the Father, but that He is now reigning over an extended area of the world, in his mediatorial capacity. As our Lord took possession of his mediatorial throne the moment He reached the heavens, when He ascended up on high, so He will continue there, in the exercise of his royal mediatorial functions, until He comes the second time without sin unto salvation.

Some eminent divines who share my views in other respects on Millennial matters, represent Christ as having commenced his mediatorial reign on the day of Pentecest, when there was so remarkable an outpouring of the influences of the Holy Ghost. I regard this belief as altogether erroneous. Were it correct, the result would be that in the interval between our Lord's ascension and the Pentecostal effusion of the Holy Spirit, He must have been without any mediatorial kingdom at all. I regard the Pentecostal work of the Spirit as manifesting in a remarkable manner, for the first time, the existence of the mediatorial kingdom of Christ, but not as constituting the commencement of that kingdom. The distinction between the two things is as important as it is easy of comprehension.

But it is also an important element in the Millenarian system, that not only will the Lord reign over the whole earth when, as Millenarians say, He comes to set up his Millennial throne in Jerusalem, but that his saints will reign with Him during a thousand years. They are to be sharers in his sovereignty, each of them having a throne of his own, whence He is to promulgate his good pleasure and to enforce his supreme authority. That this is not to be construed in a literal sense, I feel

satisfied that I have conclusively shown in a previous part of this chapter. That it is only to be understood in a figurative or spiritual sense, appears to me to admit of something like moral demonstration. The only instances in which it is stated that the saints shall hereafter reign are four in number. The first occurs in the twelfth verse of the second chapter of the Second Epistle to Timothy. It is there said, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him," that is, with Christ. Now nothing is here said, nor is there anything in the context to justify the belief, that Paul is speaking in this place of the reigning of the saints on earth. On the contrary, the context points to the probability, if not the absolute certainty, that the apostle referred in the verse in question to the reign of the saints with Christ in heaven. In the tenth verse we read, "Therefore I endure all things for the elects' sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." As Paul therefore speaks in this verse of "eternal glory," which is synonymous with the blessedness of heaven, nothing could be more likely

than that, when he speaks in the next verse but one of the saints reigning with Christ, that his reference is to their reigning with Him in heaven, not on earth. At any rate, Millenarians have not even the semblance of a warrant for assuming that the allusion here is to the saints reigning personally with Christ on earth.

The next allusion to the future reigning of the saints occurs in the tenth verse of the fifth chapter of Revelation. The verse must be taken in its connection with that which precedes it. Speaking of the redeemed in glory, John says, "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." That this is not to be received in accordance with the literal interpretation principle is, I think, placed beyond all doubt, from what precedes and follows, especially from the thirteenth verse, which is as follows, "And every crea-

ture which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Here "every creature" -- every fowl that flies in the air, every animal on the earth, every fish in the sea—is represented as not only possessing and exercising the faculty of speech, but as comprehending the scheme of human redemption and giving glory to God as its author, and to Christ as its great executor. The most zealous Millenarian will not contend that this can be construed in accordance with the literal principle of interpretation. It must be figurative language, and therefore we are justified in interpreting in a figurative sense the passage so close in proximity to it, which represents the glorified saints as reigning on the earth.

There is one difficulty in connection with the Millenarian notion of the personal reign of Christ in conjunction with his glorified saints, which I regard as one of no common force, and which I have not seen grappled with in any Millennial publication. I allude to the fact so distinctly stated in various parts of Scripture, that at the period of the world's history which they call Millennial, there will be kings in the earth other than Christ and his risen saints; and that, consequently, as the word king implies the exercise of regal authority, these other kings, in the literal sense of the word, must be reigning contemporaneously with Christ and his saints in our world during the thousand years of the personal reign of our Lord. I will only quote one passage in proof of this. It will be from the seventysecond Psalm, which Millenarians concur in calling one grand Millennial hymn, ascribing praise to Christ as reigning personally on the earth. We read as follows in the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh verses:-" He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. They that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him; and his enemies shall lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yea, all kings shall fall

down before Him: all nations shall serve Him."

Here, then, it is explicitly stated that various kings, not belonging to the category of the glorified saints, but literally earthly sovereigns, shall be reigning on the earth during the Millennial period. It is for Millenarians to reconcile the fact as they best may with their theory, that the risen and glorified saints alone will exercise regal authority in this world during the period of our Lord's personal reign. The two things are, indeed, wholly irreconcileable on the hypothesis of Christ's reign being a personal one during the Millennium; but they perfectly harmonize with the belief that the reign of Christ during the Millennial era will be a purely spiritual reign.

But the grand passage, if I may so speak, on which Millenarians ground their theory of the reign on earth of the glorified saints, is that which constitutes the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of the same book of Revelation. "Blessed and holy," says John, "is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they

shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

The only other reference made in the Scriptures to the saints as reigning will be found in the fifth verse of the concluding chapter of the Revelation. "And there shall," says John, "be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun: for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." This obviously refers to the reign of the saints in the heavenly state. In the Millennial condition of the earth there will be, as is admitted by the great majority of Millenarians themselves, day and night as at present, whereas it is here said that there shall be no night there. The light of the sun will be indispensable to our existence, as now, during the Millennium. Yonder there will be no need of the light of the sun, and consequently the sun's light being unnecessary, there will be no sun. The reign of the saints in their Millennial condition will only be, we are told, for a thousand years, but here it is to be "for ever and ever,"

The only two parts of Scripture, therefore, which Millenarians can quote, with any show of

reason, in support of their belief in a reign of the saints on earth are those in the tenth verse of the fifth chapter of the Apocalypse, and in the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of the same book. These two portions of Scripture simply say that the saints shall reign on the earth-the first merely stating that "we shall reign on the earth"; and the second that "we shall reign with Christ a thousand years." Now, it might be supposed that a very small amount of candour would have constrained our Millenarian friends to confess that two such passages as these constitute a very inadequate foundation on which to build the edifice of a thousand years' reign of the saints with Christ on the earth.

To my mind, there is enough in two other passages, to say nothing of many others, to show that the texts to which I have referred contain no proof of a reign of the saints with Christ on earth either for a thousand years or for any other period. In the eighth verse of the fourth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul thus addresses the Church at Corinth, "Now ye are full, now ye are rich,

ye have reigned as kings without us: and I would to God that ye did reign, that we also might reign with you." I should like to see a Millenarian reading of this portion of Scripture. I have never yet met with one. Applying to it the principle of a literal interpretation, there is in it just as much ground to believe that the Corinthian saints had reigned, as that the glorified saints and Christ shall reign together during the Millennial period. The language, understood literally, is just as expressive, just as explicit, in the former as in the latter case. The words of John, in the twentieth chapter of Revelation, in which he states that those who were beheaded for Christ shall reign, or will hereafter reign, with Him for a thousand years, are not one whit more explicit than are the words of Paul, when, addressing the members of the Church at Corinth, he says, "Ye have reigned as kings," etc. Now we know that they did not reign, and that they were not kings, in the ordinary acceptation of the terms. It consequently follows that, in the absence of any specific declaration to that effect, no one has a right to infer that the reigning of the saints spoken of in the sixth verse of the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, is to be construed in a literal sense any more than the verse in the Corinthians. In the case of the Corinthians, Millenarians are forward to confess that the word "reigned" possesses a figurative or spiritual signification. Consistency then demands of them that they should not put a literal construction on the language of John, when, in his twentieth chapter of Revelation, he says that the saints shall reign.

The other text to which I wish to call attention, as proving that the glorified saints are not, in the period of the Millennium, to reign, in the literal acceptation of the term, will be found in the sixth verse of the first chapter of the book of Revelation, where it is said, "And hath made us kings and priests unto our God." They were not to be made kings and priests; they were kings and priests already. To the same effect is that other passage in the ninth verse of the second chapter of Peter's first epistle, in which he says "To the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." Now these royal titles imply the possession of authority, yet no one, not even Millenarians themselves, have ever so far strained the meaning of Scripture as to make such portions of it as I have quoted, express the literal royalty of the people of God.

I have again and again called on the Millenarians to be consistent in their application of the literal interpretation principle. If they will construe literally the few passages in which the Scriptures speak of the saints as destined to reign with Christ, they have no right to refuse to put a literal construction on that passage in the Revelation in which Christ says to those who, by divine grace, overcome the world: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father on his throne." No Millenarian will venture to say that he interprets this language of our Lord literally. Were he to do so, he would, in a sense, be placing the saints on a footing of equality, both as regards power and glory, with

Christ Himself. No Millenarian is any more justified in construing what is said of the reigning of the saints in a strictly literal sense.

The sum of the matter, then, is this: that as the terms kings, and priests, and reigning, and thrones, in Scripture, are applied in the past and present tense to the saints of God in their existing state, while we know that such terms cannot be so applied to them in a literal sense, Millenarians have no right to assume that a literal signification is to be attached to the two passages in the book of Revelation in which the glorified saints are represented as reigning with Christ on the earth. Such a literal construction by Millenarians of the two passages under consideration is, we may add, inadmissible, because the word "reign" is not confined in its application to persons, but is applied to principles or properties as well. Death is said by Paul, in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, to have "reigned from Adam to Moses." In the same chapter the apostle tells us that sin "reigns" unto death; and in the twelfth verse of the next chapter he exhorts the Romans not to let sin "reign" in their mortal bodies. Grace, too, is described in the fifth chapter of this same epistle as "reigning." In the twentieth and twenty-first verses of that chapter Paul says: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

If, then, the saints of God are represented in the New Testament as "reigning" while in their present state of being, and if death, and sin, and grace—not persons, but properties and principles—are all said to "reign" in relation to the existing condition of mankind, it is surely very rash, to say the least, on the part of Millenarians, to hold as firmly, and to assert as dogmatically as if they had received a special revelation from heaven on the point, that the saints of God, or those constituting the Church of Christ, will enter, the moment our Lord comes again to our world, on a glorious reign of a thousand years on earth.

I might fill pages of this volume with extracts from Scripture to prove that Christ has at this time a kingdom, and will continue to have in the interval between the present period and the Millennium; but I will content myself with two or three in addition to those I have already adduced.

In the twelfth and thirteenth verses of the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians we read as follows: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." Now, let me ask how the Colossians could have been translated "into the kingdom of God's dear Son," if our Lord had not at the time had a kingdom? So, too, in the twelfth verse of the second chapter of the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, the expression occurs: "That ye"—that is the members of the Church at Thessalonica—"should walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom." They were in the kingdom of God, which is synonymous with the kingdom of Christ, which, it is evident, they could not have been if no such kingdom had existed.

I am unwilling to prolong the discussion of this aspect of the Millenarian question, but as there are few features of the scheme to which believers in the personal reign of Christ attach greater importance, or dwell on with greater seeming triumph—as if it were placed beyond all question that He has not, as yet, a kingdom, and consequently does not reign—it is desirable that an error, as I regard it, of so great magnitude, and one so dishonouring to our Lord, should be conclusively shown to be such.

Few Millenarians have written more largely in favour of the theory that Christ has no kingdom at present, and will have none until He comes the second time to our world, to establish his Millennial reign upon it, than Mr. Birks. But assuredly the scundness of his views is not in keeping with the zeal and copiousness with which he labours to insure their acceptance by the Church of Christ. He falls into errors of the strangest kind for a man of his talents and acquaintance with Scripture. "The proper kingdom of Christ," he says, in his "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," "must

be marked by three characters, which have never yet been exhibited together. There must be the *visible* presence of the King, a full and clear manifestation of his righteous will, and the public enforcement of his just authority, by the punishment of the rebellious, and the open reward of his faithful servants. This time has not yet arrived, and hence the Church has still to offer the prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.'"

"There must be the visible presence of the King" to constitute a kingdom! Who could have believed that such a position as this should be laid down by such a man as Mr. Birks. If he is right, then our Queen has no kingdom, or part of a kingdom, in India, because she has never been seen by any of the hundred millions and more, of those who are her subjects there. Neither does she reign in Canada or in Australia, her presence never having been visible in either of these colonies—called by mistake, according to Mr. Birks, a part of her dominions. Does Mr. Birks see to what an appalling result his theory would lead him? I am sure he does

nct, otherwise he would never have ventured to pen the passage I have quoted. If it be necessary to royal government that the sovereign should be personally visible, then what comes of the kingdom of God the Father? No eye hath seen God at any time, neither can see Him, yet Mr. Birks will admit that He is the Monarch as well as the Maker of all worlds. His is a universal kingdom. He is God over all. But besides this, even if we concede to Mr. Birks, for argument's sake, that in order to Christ's having a "proper kingdom," there must be his "visible presence" in it, not one out of many thousands of the subjects of his kingdom could, according to another part of Mr. Birks' Millenarian hypothesis, see our Lord. Mr. Birks maintains, that when Christ comes to our world again, He will take his seat personally and visibly on the throne of David in Jerusalem, and thence administer the affairs of his Millennial kingdom till the end of the thousand years. If so, adopting the literal meaning of the language which describes Him as sitting on the throne of David in Jerusalem, He can only be visible

to those who reside in or visit Jerusalem. This is a dilemma out of which I can see no means of escape for Mr. Birks.

As a further proof, according to the belief of Mr. Birks, that our Lord has not yet, and will not have a kingdom till He returns to establish his Millennial reign on the earth, he says, "Hence the Church has still to offer the prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.'"

That is a prayer which the Church not only has now to offer in all her supplications at the throne of the heavenly grace, but is one which she will have to offer till the close of the Millennium; for there will then be unconverted persons in the earth, and therefore room for the extension of our Lord's kingdom. "Thy kingdom come," is, indeed, a prayer which it will be proper to present to God so long as a single rebel remains on the earth to be brought into subjection to Christ, for every new subject will be an addition to his kingdom, an enlargement of its boundaries.

But while it is deeply to be deplored that so much misconception should exist in so many Millenarian minds in relation to the kingdom

of Christ—a misconception which is most dishonouring to our Lord-it is due to the believers in the personal reign of Christ, that I should not leave the impression on any of my readers that they have all fallen into the error which I have sought to expose. Some of the number who did entertain the notion that Christ has not, to use the words of Mr. Birks, "a proper kingdom," now, nor will have until He has established his Millennial kingdom on the earth, have seen their error and been forward to acknowledge it. And I believe I see indications of a tendency in the same direction in relation to others. The late Duke of Manchester, though a zealous advocate of the personal reign, earnestly maintained that Christ's kingdom commenced on his ascension. Among contemporary Millenarians there are few more earnest, and certainly fewer still more able, in their advocacy of the personal reign of Christ than the Rev. B. W. Newton. Let us see, then, how explicitly and emphatically he upholds the doctrine of Christ having a kingdom at the present time. In the third series of his "Aids to Prophecy," Mr. Newton thus

expresses himself. The italics are his own:-"' The Kingdom of Heaven' is to exist in the earth, at two very different periods:-first, while the world remains under the power of Satan as it now is; secondly, when it shall be sustained by the Manifested and Glorious power of Christ, after Satan has been bound. These are conditions, circumstantially very different; but the essential points of similarity are paramount to any of the circumstantial differences; and, therefore, those who profess the name of Christ now, and those who will bear that name in the Millennium, are alike regarded as subjects of the same kingdom. They have the same King—the same Legislator -the same Spirit—the same Priest—the same Redemption. They differ only in circumstantial relations. The kingdom of heaven is also called 'The Kingdom of Christ,' because He is its Head. Thus Christendom, or 'Christ's Kingdom,'is an equivalent expression to 'Kingdom of Heaven,' as used in this chapter of Matthew. The season of his return, therefore, will neither be the period of its introduction (for it has been already introduced), neither

will it be that of its destruction. So far from destroying it, He says that He 'will gather out of it, all things that offend'—that is, He will purify it;—and, taking his saints who are in it, into the Heavenly branch of the kingdom; He will, at the same time, bring Israel, and others converted in the earth, into its Earthly branch. Instead, therefore, of being destroyed it will be enlarged; part of its subjects glorified and itself established in undisputed supremacy of glorious power."

How very different this from those Millenarians who boldly and broadly deny that Christ has any kingdom now or will have till He comes to establish his Millennial reign on earth. While writing this, a small Millenarian work has come into my hands, which begins with the words, unaccompanied with any qualification or explanation, "Christ has no kingdom at present."

Even more objectionable is the mode in which the same sentiment is expressed in an article by the Rev. George Lloyd, of Darlington, in the current number of the "Rainbow." Mr. Lloyd has written much on

Millenarian topics, and usually with so much circumspection in relation to his phraseology, that one wonders the expression alluded to should ever have been penned by him. "Christ," says Mr. Lloyd "is now an exile from his throne." It is positively painful to hear Jesus, who is King of kings and Lord of lords, the Monarch of the boundless universe, spoken of as being expelled from his throne, and banished from his dominions; for if Mr. Lloyd will consult any standard dictionary, he will find that they all concur in describing an exile as one who is banished from his native country. Who could banish Christ? Who could displace Him from his throne? No power in the universe, no, nor all the powers in the universe acting in combination, could thus triumph ever Christ. Mr. Lloyd's language in the "Rainbow" is much more objectionable when he speaks of the Lord as "being an exile from his throne," than that of those Millenarians who say that He has never yet had, in their sense of the words, a throne or a kingdom at all. Not only is the sentiment fearfully unscriptural, but reason revolts

against it. In the nature of things it could not be that our Lord, who is at once omnipresent and omnipotent, could be ejected from his throne, or expelled from any part of his dominions. It is deeply to be deplored that so many able and excellent men should allow themselves to become so much the slaves of a system as to employ such incautious language in their zeal to propagate their opinions.

CHAPTER VI.

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE MILLENNIAL EARTH.

Among Millenarians there exists on this subject, as well as on nearly all other aspects of the Millenarian question, considerable diversity of sentiment. Some of them admit that there will be a greater or less amount of sin and consequent misery during the period of our Lord's personal reign; while others present us with a perfectly Paradisiacal picture of glory and of bliss. The great majority of modern Millenarians belong to the second class. I regard the latter as lamentably mistaken in their views of the physical and social condition of the Millennial world.

With respect to the earth's physical and social condition during the personal reign of our Lord, I see with as great clearness of perception as I do any other truth not holding a central place in the gospel scheme, that the world will be in all essential respects the same then as it is now. But before I endeavour to establish this point, let me briefly advert to the principal passages of Scripture which Millenarians adduce to prove that the Millennial period of the world's history will be physically and socially one of a perfectly Paradisiacal kind.

In doing this, I am so desirous of not being suspected of, in any way or to any extent, misconceiving, much less misrepresenting Millenarian views on this aspect of the subject, that instead of simply quoting and commenting on the passages of Scripture which they cite as confirmatory of their opinions, I will, for the most part, give in their own words the leading passages of Holy Writ which they bring forward.

Let me begin then with a reference to what the Rev. Capel Molyneux says on this point. I allude to his views, first of all, because I know of no Millenarian author of eminence who has written with greater earnest-

ness on that aspect of the subject, or described the Millennial state of the earth in brighter colours than that reverend gentleman. seventh chapter of his work, "Israel's Future," is devoted to this particular phase of the Millenarian question. Having expressed his conviction that after the advent of Christ the earth will be regenerated or made new, and that there will be a state of more than Paradisiacal blessedness and beauty, in reference to the physical and animal as well as moral and spiritual creation, Mr. Molyneux says:-"We will begin," that is, in giving his proofs from Scripture, "with the Old Testament. The eleventh chapter of Isaiah confessedly refers to the Millennial age; it runs thus, from the sixth verse:—'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.' This beautiful description of the change which shall pass on the animal creation is represented as happening after the destruction of Antichrist, as stated in verse five, and therefore after the advent of Christ.

"Again: 'The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.' Here," remarks Mr. Molyneux, "the physical change which

shall pass on the earth is portrayed; and it is supposed to occur, as an appeal to the chapter will show, at the manifestation of the glory of God, after God has come with vengeance, and when the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Sion.

"Again: 'For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.' Here the physical change is described, and, as verse five of the chapter intimates, transpires immediately after, or in connection with, the restoration and glorification of Israel, and therefore after the advent.

"Again: 'Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine

do yield their strength. Be glad, then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil.' 'And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim.'"

Having stated that "both these predictions of the earth's future blessedness are described as consequent on the advent,"—a point to which he attaches great importance—Mr. Molyneux thus proceeds:—"Let us pass on to the New Testament: 'And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' This is the only passage in the four

gospels where the regeneration of the earth is directly spoken of, if we except, possibly, in the twenty-ninth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of Matthew; and here it is associated with the reign of Christ on the throne of his glory, and of the apostles over the twelve tribes; proving, in the first place, that the term, as here used, does refer to the age to come; and, in the second, that it will be during that age alone that what it implies will be realized.

"Again: 'And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.' The 'times of the restitution of all things' are evidently the same as the time of 'the regeneration'; and while such a time is here specifically foretold, it is as plainly declared to await for its accomplishment the return of our Lord. It is also said to be foretold by all the prophets since the world began, a few proofs of which, out of an endless number that might be adduced, have been already shown.

"Again: 'Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.' The word translated 'creature' in this verse, is the same which is translated 'creation' in the following, 'The whole creation groaneth' -and means, therefore, the same; it is not to be limited to intelligent, or even animal existence, but must be understood to include the vegetable and material world as well-the earth itself, as well as what it contains; and the force of the verse is this, that creation itself -all creation with which we have to do, with which man is concerned, and which has suffered through man's fault, which has been subjected to 'vanity and groaning' through man's transgression—that all such creation shall cast off its burden, and 'enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God;' but this, too, as we are taught, at 'the manifestation of the sons of God,' for which 'the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth,' as the signal and time of its great deliverance; -at 'the manifestation of the sons of God,' I repeat, thenwhen they shall appear in their risen and

glorified bodies, and so be manifested as sons (the immediate consequence and first-fruits of the advent)—then shall the earth herself also put on her beautiful garb; her present outer covering, the corrupt vest in which she is now clad, shall be 'rolled up' and put by—done with for ever! She shall be clad anew; more beautiful shall she then be than was the garden of Eden—meet abode for the inhabitation of the converted nations, meet kingdom for the rule of Christ and his glorified Church."

I have omitted some observations interspersed with the above quotations, made by Mr. Molyneux, with the view of proving, as he believes, that the creation of the new heavens and the new earth will take place at the commencement of the Millennium, and not at the close, as many, perhaps most, Millenarians suppose.

Nearly all other Millenarian writers quote the same passages as Mr. Molyneux in favour of their notions respecting the physical and social state of blessedness which, as they believe, will be characteristic of the Millennial earth.

I regard these beautiful pictures of the glory and bliss of the Millennial earth as so many exemplifications of that imagery in which the prophetic writers of the old Testament expressed themselves, in accordance with the modes then prevalent in Eastern countries of giving utterance to their views on moral and spiritual subjects. Of this we are furnished with a remarkable and conclusive proof in the third and fourth verses of the fortieth chapter of the book of Isaiah. Looking forward to the advent of Christ, when he should be born in Bethlehem, and of the mission of John the Baptist to herald his incarnation, the prophet thus expresses himself: "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I feel a thorough conviction that if the New Testament had made

no reference to this passage, Millenarians would have quoted it as pointing to and proving the personal reign. The words in the fifth verse, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," would have insured the appropriation of the passage to Millenarian purposes. But the Evangelists-at least three of their number -expressly state that the prediction referred to the coming of Christ to our world to suffer and die for us, and that the messenger who was destined to prepare the way before Him was John the Baptist. It is at the same time no less explicitly stated that the phraseology of Isaiah, "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be laid low," was not intended to be literally understood, but was simply meant to apply to the great moral and spiritual changes which would follow the birth and public ministry of Christ. This is placed beyond all question by the language of Luke in his third chapter. It is consequently an indisputable deduction that the quotation in question from Isaiah is to be received as figuratively only. And so are the

passages in question from the same and other prophets, which Millenarians maintain ought to be received literally as descriptive of Millennium glory and happiness.

The Rev. Dr. Cumming gives us some beautiful, though I think often exceedingly fanciful, pictures of what he believes the Millennial earth will be. One of the most glowing of these pictures is that, perhaps, which is to be found in the chapter entitled "The Restitution of all Things," in his recent work "Redemption Draweth Nigh." It is too long for extract in extenso, but here is the concluding part of it. "Everything," says Dr. Cumming, "that we see in creation seems not satisfied where it is. The rock seems to aspire to flower in the form of beautiful crystals. The flower has in it latent possibilities of beauty such as we have not seen. The rose in our gardens is simply the wild hedge-rose cultivated. What does cultivation do? It does not create in the rose something it had not; it merely evolves the latent beauties that had been repressed or borne down. When the curse is removed from creation; when earth is emancipated from the yoke of corruption, how magnificent will be its flowers, how glorious its trees, how sweet and pure the air! What harmony in the sound of wind, and wave, and all things, when earth shall be restored to that beautiful and happy condition in which it once was, and in which, we are taught in the Word of God, it shall be again! There are spots on this earth at this moment that we would accept as heaven, if any one would guarantee that there should not enter into them heartaches, headaches, griefs, disappointments, losses, bereavements, the breath of autumn, and the chills and frosts of winter. Take away these things, make man holy, and let man's health be perfect, and I could not wish a brighter or more beautiful nook in heaven than some of the sweet glens in the Highlands, or some of the sequestered, beautiful spots in various parts of England. The day will come, soon, when no breath of autumn shall brown the leaf; when no chill frosts shall nip the blossom; when there shall be nothing to hurt, nothing to destroy, in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord of hosts."

There is something very exceptional in this

passage. It furnishes a striking illustration of what is called the imagination running riot. I have been personally acquainted with Dr. Cumming for a longer period than probably he, and certainly than I, would like to acknowledge. I can therefore express a confident conviction that on a careful reconsideration of one sentence in this extract, he would shrink from the inference which may be fairly deduced from it: "Make man holy, and let man's health be perfect, and I could not wish a brighter or more beautiful nook in heaven than some of the sweet glens in the Highlands, or some of the sequestered, beautiful spots in various parts of England." I have seen and admired most of the "sweet glens in the Highlands," and many of the "sequestered beautiful spots in various parts of England," but I must say that the brightest and most beautiful of them all falls incomparably short of my views of the glory and the bliss of heaven. I infinitely prefer the heaven of the Bible to the heaven of Dr. Cumming. His notion of heaven, were one to judge from the extract from his writings which I have just made, is, that it consists in

the absence of sin and suffering, in combination with beautiful scenery. My ideas of heaven differ very materially from those which Dr. Cumming here expresses. I look for something better in the celestial world than one of Dr. Cumming's nooks of the same character as his "sweet Highland glens" of Scotland, or beautiful "sequestered spots in England." As regards these material characteristics of Dr. Cumming's heaven, there is much of the Mahometan notion in them. I had always thought, and always, I feel assured, will cling to the belief, that the chief element in heaven's happiness will be the presence of God, and of Christ, of holy angels, and of the kindred spirits of the just made perfect; but Dr. Cumming, taking the above extract from his "Redemption Draweth Nigh" as it stands, would dispense with all these elements of beauty and bliss from his heaven; or, perhaps, I ought rather to say, would do without them. But, I repeat, I know enough not only of Dr. Cumming's other works, of his pulpit ministrations, and of himself personally, to feel a thorough conviction that the language on

which I am animadverting, proceeded inadvertently from his pen, and that he himself would be the last man to defend it. He, I know, looks for a better heaven than he here indicates. His hope of a happy hereafter is inseparably associated with a higher order of pleasures than those which spring from mere material sources, or the absence of suffering and sorrow.

A recent Millenarian author, the Rev. H. Shepheard, in his work, entitled "The Tree of Life"-a volume which has attracted no inconsiderable attention in Millenarian circles, quotes very largely from Scripture to show that the Millennial state of the earth will be one of great glory and bliss. I pass over the Scripture passages which Mr. Shepheard adduces, because the chief ones are the same as those which I have transferred to my pages from Mr. Molyneux's volume, "Israel's Future." But in order to give a further specimen of what the almost universal Millenarian notion regarding the physical and social condition of the earth is to be during the thousand years which the personal reign

of Christ is to last, I quote the following brief extract from the work I have named:—
"Ferocious beasts," says Mr. Shepheard, "and venomed serpents will lose the will and power to destroy: their savage natures will be turned into docility, their wild fury into submission to man's control. The curse of a righteous God for man's sin brought a blight upon the earth, and infused ferocity into the lower animals—the blessing of a reconciled God in Christ will restore fertility to earth, gentleness to the animals, and dominion to man in the person of the second Adam—even dominion over all the works of his hands for evermore."

What Mr. Shepheard and other Millenarians say respecting the entire restoration of the animals to the happy and harmless state in which they were before Satan successfully invaded Paradise, is not sanctioned by Scripture. I fully believe that in the Millennial state there will not be that source of danger to the lives of the inhabitants thereof from savage beasts of the field which there is in many parts of the world at present. But I do not

believe that this will be because the nature of beasts of prey will be changed, but because the more ferocious of the brute creation will be extirpated in those parts of the earth which are most largely peopled. I think this view is fully borne out by the thirty-fourth chapter of the prophecies of Ezekiel. That chapter is confidently claimed by Millenarians as relating to the period during which our Lord shall reign personally on earth.

Let us then listen to what the prophet says on this point—"And I will," are the words of Ezekiel, in the twenty-fifth verse, "and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods." Here it is plainly stated that "evil beasts" will be "evil beasts" still in the Millennial state, only that instead of their nature being transformed, they will "cease out of the land." We have witnessed the same in modern times in various parts of the world. In our own country, and in most countries in Europe, those beasts of prey, which centuries ago were so common,

have long since "ceased out of the land." Our belief that in the Millennial state the nature of ferocious beasts will not be changed, but that they will be extirpated in the land of Judea, to which these predictions refer, is further confirmed by the twenty-eighth verse of the same chapter. "And they"—the people of God-"shall no more," says Ezekiel, "be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid." This verse shows there will still be devouring beasts in existence, only that God's restored people of Israel shall not be in any way exposed to their ferocity. Even in the wilderness, as mentioned in the twenty-fifth chapter, "they shall dwell safely,"—the term "wilderness" clearly proving that the whole earth will not be, as Millenarians tell us it will, a perfect Paradise, beautiful and blessed as was the garden of Eden before sin had effected an entrance into it.

The Rev. M. Baxter, to whose Millenarian writings I have more than once referred, speaks with as much confidence and minute-

ness respecting the physical and social condition of the earth during the period of our Lord's personal reign upon it, as if the Millennium were already in existence, and he living upon the Millennial earth. His views on this subject are to be met with in various parts of the larger of his two works; but I will content myself with one extract from his work on Antichrist:-"The curse," he says, "that has rested upon the animal, vegetable, and mineral creation ever since the fall of Adam, will be to a great extent repealed. The hitherto sterile soil will become extraordinarily fruitful, and will require very little labour in order to produce abundant crops. Weeds will almost cease to grow naturally upon it. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree. There will be important atmospheric, meteorological, and geological changes, by means of which waste wildernesses, such as the great Sahara, and frozen regions, like those of Siberia, will become clothed with fertility and beauty, for the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose, and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. Entire exemption from sickness does not seem to be promised to the Gentile nations as to the Jews; but the leaves of the tree of life in the New Jerusalem are for the healing of the nations, and will apparently be brought down from the New Jerusalem to those upon earth who are sick. All the blind, deaf, dumb, and lame that are spared at Christ's descent will be healed. Venomous serpents will become quite harmless, and ferocious animals, such as the wolf, the leopard, the lion, and the bear, becoming graminivorous instead of carnivorous, will live peaceably with sheep and cattle, and may, perhaps, be used as beasts of burden. Man's lifetime will, perhaps be prolonged; the express promise of longevity appears, however, to be only given to the Jewish nation. These changes will necessarily cause an unparalleled increase of the earth's inhabitants, so that they will become as numerous as the sand upon the seashore." Mr. Baxter then proceeds:-"It appears that the nations will retain their distinctive customs and languages (unless Zeph. iii. 9 signifies that there will be only one

language), but will probably all have the same laws, currency, and standards of measurement, by which their mutual commercial dealings may be facilitated. The earth's inhabitants will engage in agricultural, mechanical, scientific, and mercantile occupations, and follow the legal, clerical, and literary professions, just as in these days. But the military profession will be forgotten. Peace will prevail universally. No standing armies or warlike navies will be maintained. Bayonets and rifled cannon will be regarded as the relics of a bygone age of darkness and barbarism. There will be no despotism, tyranny, or oppression. Cases of crime will be very rare. The whole earth will probably be covered with a network of railways and telegraphs, and the surface of the ocean unceasingly traversed by innumerable vessels, maintaining constant intercourse among all the communities of the globe. England and North America, released from the dominancy of Antichrist, will doubtless occupy the foremost position, next to Israel, among the regenerated nations."

I have, it is right to state, somewhat condensed the language of Mr. Baxter here. When I come to the closing chapter of this volume I shall have occasion to fully unfold my own views respecting the Millennial state of the earth. In the meantime I will content myself with endeavouring to show that the physical and social condition of the Millennial world will not be at all, in its glory or bliss, what the above quotations from Millenarian works would lead us to conclude it will be. Here the world is represented as destined to be, during the personal reign of Christ, in a perfectly Paradisiacal state. Mr. Molyneux, indeed, in a part of his work which I have not quoted, affirms that the Millennial world, will, in its beauty and bliss, even surpass what the garden of Eden was so long as Adam and Eve remained in a state of innocence. And I might name a great number of other eminent Millenarian authors who, if they have not said the same thing in precisely the same phraseology, are yet prepared to indorse the statement of Mr. Molyneux. It is much to be regretted that an undue fondness for a

favourite theory should deprive many eminent and excellent men of that soberness of mind which they feel and manifest in relation to other subjects.

Just let us look for a little at the principal Scriptural passages which we have quoted from the work of Mr. Molyneux, and which he, and indeed all Millenarians, regard as conclusively proving that the physical and social condition of the Millennial earth will be such as to render it one glorious universal Paradise. The first passage quoted by Mr. Molyneux is the well-known description, in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, of the perfect harmony which is to subsist among the ferocious beasts of the field, while the venomous creatures that crawl on the earth are to become so harmless, that children will handle them without receiving the slightest injury. Millenarians put a literal construction upon all this, and those other somewhat similar portions of Scripture which speak in glowing language of the state of prosperity and happiness with which the world is destined, at some future period of its history, to be blessed. To me it appears as

certain as if it were distinctly stated to be so, that these and the kindred passages are so much mere metaphor,—a species of writing with which the books of all the prophets abound, and which is still in high favour in Eastern lands. The Millenarian notion involves the assumption that the various animals and reptiles which are mentioned by Isaiahand indeed all ferocious animals and venomous creatures - will undergo a thorough transformation in their nature and habits. The Scriptures, rightly understood, give no sanction to any such notion. It may surprise some of my Millenarian readers when I state, that precisely the same metaphorical mode of describing a prosperous state of the earth was adopted by the heathen poets. "The heathen poets," we are told, "describe the felicity of the golden age by representing rapacious beasts of prey as gentle and harmless, and the flocks and herds as dreading no danger from them!" Instances of this will be found in the "Eclogues" of Virgil,—of which there is a striking one in that poet's fourth Eclegue. Nor is this all. It may surprise some of those

less conversant with the history of Millenarianism to be informed, that the passage in question in the writings of Isaiah, and similar passages in others of the prophets, have only of late been construed in a literal sense. The Millenarians of the seventeenth century regarded the passage under consideration, and others of a similar kind, as simply figurative. Dr. Thomas Burnett, in his "Theory of the Earth," says: "These expressions-namely, 'the wolf and the lamb dwelling together,' etc.—here mean as great a change in the world"-by which Dr. Burnett means in the men of the world-"as if the animals were so changed." More explicit and more emphatic still in favour of this mode of interpretation is Dr. Gill, a man of eminent Biblical scholarship and general learning, and whom the Millenarians of the present day regard as one of the very highest authorities on theological questions generally, to be met with among the divines of this or any other country. "The wild and tame creatures," says Dr. Gill, "shall agree together, and the former shall become the latter, which is not

to be understood literally of the savage creatures, as if they should lose their nature, and be restored, as it is said, to their Paradisiacal estate, which is supposed to be the time of the restitution of all things, but figuratively of men comparable to wild creatures, who, through the power of divine grace accompanying the word preached, shall become tame, mild, meek, and humble; such who have been as ravenous wolves, have worried Christ's sheep, made havoc of them, breathing out slaughter and threatenings against them, as did save through converting grace, become as gentle and harmless as lambs, and they take up their residence in Christ's fold, and dwell in it. Yea, some of them even feed Christ's lambs and sheep."

But if modern Millenarians will persist on putting a literal construction on the four verses I have quoted—namely, the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, we, who do not share their views in relation to Millenarian matters, have a right to insist that they shall interpret literally the fourth verse of the same chapter. "But

with righteousness," says the prophet, in that verse, "shall He"-that is, Christ-"judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his mouth shall He slay the wicked." The latter expression cannot be literally interpreted. Christ does not slay the wicked with a literal rod of, or in, or from his mouth, neither does He with the actual "breathing of his mouth." Besides, according to the Millenarian notion of a state of universal Millennial holiness and happiness, we ought not to look for "the wicked" to be slain. The whole passage is manifestly intended to portray by means of the beautiful imagery which the prophet employs, the peace, prosperity, and happiness which, at some future period in the world's history, will generally prevail among mankind, through the universality and power of gospel principles.

Equally incompatible with the literal interpretation principle is the next quotation which Mr. Molyneux makes—and which, indeed, is made by nearly every other Millenarian—from

the thirty-fifth chapter of the same book of Isaiah, as referring to a period during which, as Millenarians say, our Lord will reign personally on the earth. The verses cited are the first, second, sixth and seventh. In fact, there is not a sentence in either of the first two verses which will admit of a really literal construction. The wilderness and the solitary place will, it is said, be glad. Now we know that inanimate nature is incapable of either joy or sorrow. It has no consciousness at all, and consequently is susceptible of no emotion of any kind. But it is here represented as not only being "glad" and "rejoicing," but as even "singing." It is true that poets sometimes speak of nature or creation as vocal, but they avowedly do so in a purely imaginative, not a real sense. Nature or creation has no audible voice, in the literal import of the latter term, and therefore the "singing" attributed to it in the passage in question is figurative, not literal.

In the next citation which Mr. Molyneux makes, which is from the fifty-fifth chapter of the same book of prophecies, we find Isaiah repeating himself in nearly the same language as he employed in the passage on which I have been animadverting. "The mountains and the hills," he says, "shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." "Trees of the field," I need not say, have no hands which they could "clap"; and even if they had hands, they could not clap them, not possessing the qualities of consciousness or intelligence.

The next quotation made by Mr. Molyneux is from the second and third chapters of the prophet Joel, a quotation to be met with in the works of nearly all Millenarian writers. In this portion of Scripture-or rather two passages incorporated by Mr. Molyneux into one-there are phrases which are just as incapable of a literal construction as those to which I have referred. In the twenty-first and twentysecond chapter of the prophet, he is brought before us as addressing, first "the land," and then "the beasts of the field." "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field." I wonder whether so extreme a Millenarian is anywhere to be met with as that

he would interpret literally this language. It is due to Millenarians to say, that some of their number, when hard pressed on the point, admit that the parts of Scripture which I have quoted, or rather which Mr. Molyneux has quoted in support of his Millenarian views, are capable of a spiritual signification. The Rev. W. Harrison, Rector of Birch, Essex, and formerly Lecturer at the Foundling, London, is one of these more enlightened and more liberal Millenarians. In his sermon on "The Vastness of Christ's Kingdom," published as one of the Bloomsbury discourses on Millennial subjects, all that he contends for is the probability that they admit of a literal construction. Mr. Harrison's words are: "It may be considered that these passages are capable of a spiritual signification, which I do not deny; but as we are speaking of probabilities, when we take together the various predictions in which this imagery is used, it does seem as if the literal application of it could not be forbidden."

Would it not be also an outrage on the common sense of mankind to interpret the first

part of the eighteenth verse of the third chapter in a strictly literal sense? For there we are told that "it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk."

Mr. Molyneux, in describing the physical condition and social blessedness of the Millennial earth, next comes to what he regards as New Testament evidence in favour of his views. I feel persuaded that in interpreting Christ's words "in the regeneration," in the passage in the twenty-ninth verse of the nineteenth chapter of Matthew, as meaning the regeneration of the earth, he quite misconceives what was in the mind of Christ when He so expressed Himself. He supposes that the "regeneration" of the earth was meant by our Lord. I am fully persuaded that the word "regeneration" has no reference whatever to the earth. I wonder, indeed, that either Mr. Molyneux or any other intelligent reader of the passage could have conceived that it had.

The language of our Lord, in the verse in question, was an answer to a question put

to Him in the preceding verse by Peter. The question of Peter was caused by the remarks of our Lord relative to the difficulty of a rich man entering into the kingdom of God, adding, however, that, though difficult, it was not impossible, inasmuch "as with God all things are possible." Peter, on this, put the question to Christ, having previously said that he and the other apostles had forsaken all and followed Him, "What shall we have, therefore?" To this question of Peter, our Lord returned the answer I have quoted respecting his disciples following Him in "the regeneration," and the consequent reward. The word "regeneration," therefore, as here employed by Christ, viewed in connection with the question of Peter, manifestly means the devotion of the apostles to their Master, and their self-sacrificing co-operation with Him in his great work of seeking to regenerate and save the world. Anything more destitute of evidence that the passage relates to the Millennial state of the earth, as Mr. Molyneux so confidently assumes it does, I could not imagine.

Not less groundless is the succeeding supposition of Mr. Molyneux, that "the times of the restitution of all things" are "evidently the same as the time of the regeneration." Of course this could not be, if I am right in my interpretation of the phrase, "the regene-But I trust to be able to show hereafter, with a conclusiveness which will amount to moral demonstration, that "the times of the restitution of all things" cannot, without doing the utmost violence alike to the meaning of words and of things, be applied to the commencement of the Millennium. Suffice it in the meantime to say, that there can be no "restitution of all things" until after the close of the Millennium; for all Millenarians admit, that immediately on the expiration of the thousand years' personal reign of Christ, there will be such an exhibition of evil in all its varied phases, -such scenes of disorder and crime, as the world never before witnessed; for then Satan is again to be let loose, and will set about deceiving the nations with greater success, as well as with greater malignity, than ever.

But I now come to the last of the passages which Mr. Molyneux quotes, and on which he lays especial stress, as proving, in his opinion, that the Millennial state of the earth will, in a physical and social point of view, be one of a most glorious kind. It is the passage in the eighth chapter of the Romans in which the words occur, "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth together in pain until now." Mr. Molyneux interprets the words, "the creature" and "creation," as being "not limited to intelligent or even animal creatures," but as intended to be "understood to include the vegetable and material world as well." All Millenarians, so far as I am aware, concur with Mr. Molyneux when he applies the words "creature" and "creation," as here used by Paul, to the animal world, but there are many Millenarians who do not agree with him when he represents the vegetable and material world as groaning by reason of sin, which is a synonymous expression with being "made subject to vanity." It is due to Mr. Molyneux here to state, that some of the most eminent of our Biblical critics share his views with respect to the glorious change which is to be wrought on the inanimate creation, on the return of our Lord. Among these may be mentioned Dean Alford; but it is right to add that Dean Alford is, like Mr. Molyneux, a decided Millenarian.

Let me, in connection with the point under consideration, seriously ask Mr. Molyneux, who is one of the most strenuous advocates with whose Millenarian writings I am acquainted, for the universality of the application of the literal interpretation principle, pushing it even to the extent of its invariable applicability-let me ask him whether he is prepared to press that principle here? Has he himself heard, in the strictest literal sense of the terms, the "groans" of the vegetable and material world? It is for himself to answer the question. If those "groans" have reached his ears, he is the only one, Millenarian or otherwise, who has ever heard them. Does Mr. Molyneux, let me further ask, really

mean to say that he believes in the fact, in the literal sense of the words, that "the vegetable and material world has been made subject to vanity," and that it is "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God"? No, he cannot. It is impossible. Longing, waiting, groaning, hoping, travailing in pain, are emotions and exercises of the mind, which cannot be experienced by the "vegetable or material world." They can only be experienced by creatures which have life, and are susceptible of pain or pleasure. But I feel no less certain that it is not even the animal creation that the apostle here has in his eye. I am satisfied that his language was meant to be understood of mankind only. This appears to me placed beyond all doubt by the simple fact-were there no other evidence to the same effectthat in the very next verse following that in which he describes the pains and the groans of "creation," he adds, "And not only they, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Instead of the

pronoun "they," the apostle ought to have used the word "it," were Mr. Molyneux, and those other Millenarians who share his views on this point, right in their belief that the language of Paul applies to inanimate creation,— "the vegetable and material world." Besides the other expression of the apostle, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God," could not with propriety be used in relation to the vegetable or material world. Inanimate creation can never be made a partaker of "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Neither can the language apply to the irrational creation, for the lower animals are incapable of any mental emotions whatever, and consequently can know nothing of "expectation" or "waiting." Nor can the brute creation be made to share in "the glorious liberty of the children of God." To me it appears most manifest, that when the apostle so expressed himself he had in his eye mankind in general, all of whom do groan or travail in pain, earnestly desiring happiness, and many of them through sovereign

grace, destined to be brought into "the glorious liberty of the children of God." The view of this passage which I have thus expressed, and have always entertained, has, it gives me much pleasure to find, been taken by some of our most able expositors of the Word of God. "The meaning cannot be," says Professor Stuart, a distinguished American divine, "the material creation; it is but an assumption without a foundation, that this will be changed for the better after the resurrection."

To those who would like to see the various renderings which have been given of the expression in question, I would commend Professor Stuart's "Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, where he enumerates no fewer than eleven renderings, which, though severally differing more or less from each other, all concur in repudiating the idea of inanimate creation being meant by the apostle. The Rev. Dr. Winslow, referring in his "No Condemnation" to this fact, repudiates all the interpretations of the apostle's words, "creature" and "creation," which

have been given by previous and contemporary expositors, and advances one of his own. His impression then was, that the right rendering is "the renewed creature—the Christian in his regenerate state." Whether Dr. Winslow still adheres to this interpretation or not, I am unable to say; but if he does, he differs from nearly all, if not all, modern Millenarians, whose views on other points he has lately adopted, for they concur in the belief that the language of Paul includes the irrational creation.

Dr. Lightfoot, whom all admit to be one of the soundest as well as most learned Biblical critics in the wide range of theological literature, not only expresses the same opinion which I have done as to the meaning of the passage, but in nearly the same words. "Not only they, but ourselves also," says that eminent expositor of Scripture, "show that the apostle is speaking not of the brute and inanimate creation, but of mankind, and of their earnest desire of immortality." Dr. Adam Clarke concurs in the view of the eminent theologian I have just quoted. "Some think," says Dr. Clarke, "that the brute

creation is here meant; others apply it to the Jewish people; others to the godly; others to the Gentiles; others to the good angels; and others to the fallen spirits, both angelic and human. Dissertations without end have been written on it; and it does not appear that the Christian world are come to any general agreement on the subject. Dr. Lightfoot's mode of explanation appears to me to be the best on the whole." This explanation, as I before remarked, accords with the view I had taken of the passage before I had referred to a single commentator or other theological author on the point.

But the annotator whose opinion of all others on this point will naturally be received by Millenarians with the greatest deference, is Dr. Gill, inasmuch as he is perhaps the most learned theologian among those divines whose names are to be found in the Millenarian category. His observations on the passage are too extended and too critical for quotation. Suffice it, therefore, to say, that he repudiates entirely the notion that the word "creation" includes either the brute or

inanimate creation. He holds that it means the Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews.

I need not repeat that I differ from Dr. Gill to the extent of believing that the words "creature" and "creation," as here employed, are not to be confined in their application to the "Gentiles," but that they include the whole of the human race, who are strangers to the faith, the hope, the peace of the gospel. This view is borne out by our Lord Himself, when giving his commission to his disciples to make a universal proclamation of the gospel message. "Go ye," He said, "into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature:" not, of course, to the irrational creation, but to all mankind. Paul, too, speaks of our Lord Himself, in relation to his humanity, as "the first-born of every creature." And the apostle John, in the thirteenth verse of the fifth of his Revelation, represents "every creature which is in heaven" as engaged in ascribing all praise, and honour, and glory to Christ. Now no Millenarian will go so far, however great his zeal for his system may be, as to say that in heaven there are irrational

animals who join in chorus with saints and angels in worshipping and praising our glorious Lord.

I have thus dwelt at unusual length on the passage in question, because it is the great stronghold of the Millenarian system, so far as relates to the belief in the removal, at the second advent of our Lord, of the curse from the brute creation and from the earth. In my next chapter I will endeavour to show that the idea, so far from receiving support from any other part of Scripture, is entirely at variance with its utterances on the subject.

CHAPTER VII.

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITION OF THE MILLENNIAL EARTH.

(Concluded.)

I HOPE I have shown, with a conclusiveness which ought to satisfy every unbiassed mind, that in the Millennial earth there will not be that perfectly Paradisiacal state of things which the more sanguine Millenarians prepare us to expect. But lest some readers should still continue unconvinced, and as the point is one which has so important and so direct a bearing on the Millenarian question generally, it may be well to refer to a few out of many of the direct testimonies of Scripture to the fact, that during the Millennial period of the world's history there will be much of sin, and consequently of sickness, suffering, and sorrow; for as it was sin, or as Milton tells

us in the opening of his "Paradise Lost," the eating of "the fruit of the forbidden tree, which brought death into the world and all our woe," so there must needs be sickness, and sorrow, and death while sin continues to exist on our earth.

The very fact that there will be death though the fact be denied by some Millenarians-during the Millennial period of the world's history, necessarily implies that there must be pain and consequent misery, for we cannot dissociate suffering from death. But lest some should suppose that there might be death in the course of the Millennial state of the earth without that decrepitude and that pain with which we are accustomed to associate the approach and the fact of death, let us listen for a few moments to what the Word of God says on the subject. First of all, then, we read in the eighth chapter of the prophet Zechariah as follows:-"Thus saith the Lord: I am returned unto Sion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain. Thus

saith the Lord of hosts, There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in hand for very age."

Here it is implied with a clearness as great on the point, as if it had been affirmed in the most explicit terms, that in the Millennial epoch of the earth's history there will be bodily decay and infirmity, just as we witness them at the present hour. Now we all know from observation, and many a saint of God knows from his own experience, what an amount of suffering and sorrow is incident to that bodily weakness, that physical infirmity, which are implied in the words, "every man with his staff in hand for very age."

But while some Millenarians assert that there will be no suffering, nor sorrow, nor death during the Millennium, it is due to the interests of truth to state, that there are others who as earnestly maintain, as I do myself, that there will be sickness and death during the Millennium, just as there are during the existing dispensation. Mr. Ogilvy, in his volume, "The Day of the Lord," written in support of

the theory of the personal reign of Christ, expresses himself very explicitly and very forcibly on this point. Referring to the passage in the sixty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, in which it is said that there shall not be an old man that hath not filled up his days, that able Millenarian says: "Here again mention is made of old age among the righteous, and the filling up of one's days, which seems reasonably to imply that they have a completing, end, or termination—a filling up—which we do not think could, with any propriety, be said of an undying man, of one whose days could not be filled up."

But there is another passage in Isaiah—in the twentieth verse of the sixty-fifth chapter—where the fact is stated that those who live during the Millennial dispensation of the world's history will die just as they do in the present dispensation. "There shall," says the prophet, "be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old—or, dying at an hundred, shall be but a child; but the sinner being [dying at] an hundred years old, shall be accursed."

Nothing could be more explicit than the statement which is here given, that there will be sin-which necessarily involves miseryand also death, during the Millennium. I might have quoted other passages from the writings of Isaiah, proving the fact that there will be death as well as sin under the Millennial dispensation, as there is under the present; but I will content myself with a single citation more. It is the last verse of the last chapter in that prophet's book-a chapter which, in its latter part, all Millenarians agree in regarding as exclusively referring to the state of the earth during the time of our Lord's personal reign upon it. It is the next verse but one to that in which we are promised the "new heavens and the new earth," which Millenarians consider, even if it stood alone, to be conclusive as to a glorious Millennium on earth under the personal sovereignty of Christ. "And," says the prophet, "they"—that is, the Jewish people of God-"shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall

their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." The word "carcases," I need not say, means dead bodies. Could, then, I earnestly ask those who picture to their own minds a Millennium in which there will be no death, a stronger proof be furnished than is contained in this passage of Scripture, that men will die then as now?

Coming down to the utterances of Jeremiah on the same aspect of the Millenarian question, we find him as plain in his utterances as Isaiah in relation to the fact that there will be both sin and death in the world during its Millennial period. All Millenarians are agreed that the twenty-ninth and thirtieth verses of the thirty-first chapter of Jeremiah's book refer to the Millennium. "In those days," says that prophet, in the passage in question, "they," the restored and converted Jews, "shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." "And this, too," remarks the Millenarian, Mr. Ogilvy, "in the very days when, as in the

thirty-fourth verse, it is said generally, 'They shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know Me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.'"

Leaving the prophet Jeremiah, we come to the prophet Ezekiel. The latter prophet is no less plain than Isaiah and Jeremiah in his enunciation of the fact, that during the Millennium men and women will die as they do in the dispensation in which it is our lot to live. Curiously enough, the fact of their dying during the Millennial period of the earth's history is distinctly stated in one of those very chapters on which Millenarians set the greatest store. They do so because they think that it not only proves that there will be a Millennium under the personal superintendence of our Lord, but minutely describes its strictly religious character. In the fortyfourth chapter of Ezekiel's prophecies, and at the twenty-second verse, it is said, in reference to the priests, that they shall not take "for

their wives a widow," except in such a case as that of a widow who had a priest before. Now, here is a distinct intimation, that during the Millennial period death will occur just as it does under the existing dispensation. The same fact is repeated in the twenty-fifth verse, where it is said that the ministering priests shall not come to any dead person to defile themselves.

Some Millenarians, feeling the impossibility of denying, with the passages I have quoted before them, that there will be death during the Millennium, as now, would fain persuade us that those only will die in the Millennial period of the world's existence who have lived a life of more than ordinary ungodliness. There is not in the whole of the Scriptures a single sentence which gives even the shadow of a sanction to this. On the contrary, the very last quotation I have made from the prophet Ezekiel furnishes conclusive evidence the other way. The priests who shall then minister at the altar under what Millenarians regard as an eminently holy dispensation, will, we may confidently assume, be amongst the most godly of the Millennial period, yet we see, from the passage in question, that death will occur to them as well as to others.

If we descend down the stream of the Church's history until we come to New Testament times, the fact that Death will continue his work of devastation among mankind till the end of the world, in the literal meaning of the phrase, will be found established beyond all question by the explicit utterances of the apostles. Death, as Paul clearly sets forth, in the fifth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, is the penalty which will inevitably be inflicted for sin. If, as he says, "death," up till his time, "passed upon all men," because all had sinned, it is plain that as in the Millennial state all will sin, death will then, as now, continue to "pass upon all men."

In the fifteenth chapter of the same apostle's First Epistle to the Corinthians, it is said—"That in Adam all die." This will be as true in the Millennial state as it is now, for then, as at present, we shall possess the corrupt nature which we all inherit from Adam, and with which death is inseparably

associated. It is consequently strange that there should be found some eminent men among Millenarians, who think that death will be unknown during the Millennial period of the world's history.

But I feel it right to say that the number of those among the Millenarians of the present day who still adhere to what formerly was an almost universal belief among them, that there would be no death during the Millennium, is daily diminishing. But though not in words maintaining that there will be no death during the thousand years of Christ's personal reign, they all affirm that there will be so few instances of death that it almost comes to the same thing. They are unanimous in asserting that the Millennial period will be one of antediluvian longevity, and point triumphantly to the prolonged life of Methuselah. And certainly if all those living on the Millennial earth were to attain his good old age, those born thirty-one years after the commencement of the Millennium, would survive it, he having lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years. Among those Millenarian

writers who have boldly committed themselves to this view, I may mention the Rev. J. C. Goodhart, of Park Chapel, Chelsea. In a sermon which he delivered in St. George's Church, Bloomsbury, in the year 1852, as one of a series by eminent clergymen on Millenarian subjects, and since published in a volume, Mr. Goodhart says-"The instances which have been adduced of transgression and death are after all but limited exceptions to a universal rule. While lengthened promises and predictions of the [Millennial] holiness and the glory are given again and again, it is but in two or three passages that any contrast to that condition is intimated; so that after all it may be only now and then that the sinner may be met with." Mr. Goodhart here refers to an absence of sin, which is almost tantamount to universal holiness. With regard to death in the Millennial state, Mr. Goodhart further says-" The only text which I remember as alluding to death in the Millennium-a text already quoted above-implies the righteous infliction of punishment on any that dare to transgress, summary as it would seem and instant, something like that which occurred under the former theocracy of Israel. A translator, entirely unprejudiced, at least in favour of our views, gives as the more accurate sense of the Hebrew, 'He shall be reckoned a child who dies a hundred years old; and he that fails of reaching a hundred years shall be considered as taken off by God's special judgment'; or, in other words, 'Death at the age of a hundred years will be reckoned altogether premature and extraordinary; and can only result from special punishment inflicted for sin.' I am not aware that death under any other circumstances is anywhere stated or implied during the Millennium, though no information is given, as far as I know, as to what becomes of the righteous and holy. Probably some may be translated like Enoch, and the rest may live on like Methuselah and the other antediluvian patriarchs to the end of the Millennial dispensation, by which time doubtless further information will be afforded."

I feel that I have so completely answered all this by anticipation, that I do not deem it

necessary to offer a special reply to it. Then, as now, it will be true that it is appointed unto all men once to die. But there is one brief text of Scripture which ought to be held decisive of the question. In the twenty-sixth verse of the fifteenth chapter of the first Corinthians—a chapter from which I have already quoted-it is said that "the last enemy which shall be destroyed is death." Now we know that after the Millennium Satan will not only be found in existence, but that he will be more active and malevolent than ever; for Satan is then to be let loose, and having marshalled his armies, is to go up to Armageddon to do battle with Christ and his saints. Satan's hosts must be vanquished and punished, before death, the last enemy, is destroyed.

I have felt it right thus to devote considerable space to show that there will be death in the world until the close of the earth's existence, because if that fact be made clear, it is subversive of the Millenarian hypothesis of the transcendent glory and bliss which will characterize the thousand years' personal reign of Christ. Nature will then, as

now, shrink from contact with death. The grave will, in a greater or less degree, be invested with gloom. It will still be true in a measure that men, as now, will, through fear of death, be all their lifetime subject to bondage. The Millennium will not, therefore, be that perfect Paradise which Millenarian minds picture to themselves, and which it is represented to be by Millenarian pens in Millenarian publications.

But apart from the deductions from that marvellous amount of bliss which we are told to expect in the Millennial state, so vividly portrayed by Millenarian pencils, which will be consequent on the fact that death will then occur as now, there will be found much to diminish the happiness of that state from other causes partaking more or less of a physical or social character. The climate and the seasons, for example, of the Millennial earth will be essentially the same as at present. In the twenty-second verse of the eighth chapter of Genesis we are told by God, that "while the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and

day and night, shall not cease." Nothing could be more explicit than this. And if the seasons are thus to remain the same during the Millennium as they are now, there will be all the physical discomforts and social inconveniences which at present result from the summer's heat and the winter's cold. Men will then be exhausted as now by the height of the temperature, and shiver and feel benumbed when the temperature is unusually low. In winter the face of nature will look bleak, barren, and cheerless; while in summer, though nature's aspect in the fields and gardens will be pleasant to the eye, there will be the drawback of a burning sun, a close atmosphere, and the swarms of troublesome insects, with various other sources of discomfort, which the season of summer never fails to bring with it.

That such will continue to be the state of things in the Millennial condition of the world, is placed beyond all question by the passage which I have quoted from the eighth chapter of Genesis. I know how ingenious Millenarians are in making the expression of "the end of the world" to mean, in every instance where it will suit their purpose, "the end of the dispensation," or of "the age"; but that expedient will not avail them here. It would be impossible to frame in more explicit language a statement to the effect that the seasons would continue the same till the literal end of the earth's existence, than is given in the verse in question. And indeed I am not aware that any Millenarian has ever ventured to deny that it is the physical earth, not "dispensation" or "age" that is here referred to as that with which the permanent succession of the seasons is associated.

But if there be a single Millenarian in whose mind there still exists a doubt as to whether what God says respecting the continued succession of "seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night," is applicable to the Millennial state of this world, let me refer such Millenarian to the eighth verse of the fourteenth chapter of Zechariah—a chapter which all Millenarians concur in regarding as the most Millenarian chapter in the whole of the Old

Testament. "And," says the prophet, "it shall be in that day that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea; in summer and in winter it shall be." So that in this passage, universally received by Millenarians as referring to the condition of the world during the thousand years' personal reign of Christ, the fact is distinctly stated that there will be summer and winter as at present. It is therefore as plain as words could make it, that the physical condition of the Millennial earth, instead of being as Paradisiacal as Millenarians assure us it will, will be essentially the same as it is at present. Those who live upon it will experience all the vicissitudes of weather which we at present witness, and all the discomforts incident to such variableness of the weather which we now experience.

That the Millennial earth will not be the second garden of Eden all the world over, which Millenarians assure us it will, is further placed beyond all question by what is said in the same chapter of Zechariah from which I

have just quoted—a chapter, be it remembered, which, as I have said, all Millenarians agree in saying has an exclusive reference to the thousand years' personal reign of our Lord. "And it shall be," saith the prophet, in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth verses, "that whose will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles."

Every one knows what physical and social miseries are involved in the absence of rain. Thirst and hunger, the absence of vegetation and of food, are the inevitable consequences of continued drought. Nothing can be conceived more fearful than the results of the prolonged want of rain. Yet here, in this pre-eminently Millenarian chapter, we are in

effect told that there will not only be a scarcity of rain, but that there will be no rain at all in particular parts of the world, in which there will be found ungodly persons, that refuse to come up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord of hosts. And as if intolerable drought were not enough, there shall be, we are told, "the plague wherewith the Lord will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles." Surely this is not a state of things which can in any sense be comparedas Millenarians assure us the Millennial earth will fitly be-to the garden of Eden before our first parents had, by eating the forbidden fruit, fallen from their state of innocence, and consequently incurred the displeasure of God.

The Scriptures abound with various other proofs that the physical condition of the earth will be essentially the same in its Millennial period as it is at present, and ever has been since the fall. Men will then, as now, not only be exposed to the discomforts consequent on changes of seasons and the variableness of weather, but they will have to toil in the fields, and do laborious work in towns. The sowing

of the seed in the ground in the spring, and the reaping of the harvest in the autumn, will involve the same amount of labour, and exposure to the unpleasant vicissitudes of the seasons, and to bodily exhaustion, as at present. It will still be true that in the sweat of their face shall men eat their bread. Of this the proofs are so numerous that it is not necessary to occupy time or space by quoting those of a general character. I may, however, refer to one illustration of the discomfort which will be experienced in Millennial times, because the passage of Scripture to which I refer is equally at variance with the entire removal of the curse from the brute creation as from mankind. The passage constitutes the twentieth verse of the sixty-sixth chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah, "And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the Lord." Here it is explicitly stated that from

all nations, and, of course, from the remotest parts of Africa, India, China, Japan, Siberia,every part, in a word, of the habitable globethe heathen shall come up to Jerusalem to worship God with the children of Israel. And this is to be done, this journey is to be taken, not once in a lifetime, or every seven years, or even every year, but, as is distinctly stated in the twenty-third verse, every month, nay, every week. "And it shall come to pass," says the prophet, "that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord." In dealing with another phase of the Millenarian question I shall have occasion to show that to do what is here stated would be physically impossible. In the meantime, I refer to the passage to show that the necessary expenses, the fatigue, the inconveniences generally, and the perils incident to such journeys, supposing them, physically and geographically, possible, would be incompatible, so far as men are concerned, with the Paradisiacal or blissful state which will, Millenarians tell us, characterize the world during our

Lord's thousand years' personal residence in it. Equally incompatible with such journeys would be the restored happiness which Millenarians tell us will be enjoyed by the brute creation. Here horses, mules, etc., are still to be beasts of burden, the same as they now are; and it is easy to conceive how they will suffer and be exhausted by the heavy loads of human beings and their luggage which they are to carry in the lengthened journeys they will have to perform. The rational and irrational creation, therefore, though their condition may be much modified, will not be restored to the condition they were in, in Paradise, before the fall of Adam. supposition that they will be is purely fanciful; it is without foundation in the Word of God.

In connection with the assumed Paradisiacal state, which Millenarians tell us will characterize the Millennial earth, I cannot refrain from repeating a remark which I have already made more than once—namely, that it is marvellous, as it assuredly is lamentable, to see how the minds of men of great acuteness, and capable, in other respects, of weighing the force of evidence, can be so warped by a

cherished system as to be seduced into great and glaring errors. Is it not passing strange that we should find so many eminent theologians firmly believing that, during the Millennial era of the world's history, the curse will be removed alike from the rational, the irrational, and the inanimate creation, in the face of so much evidence in the Word of God which conducts to the opposite conclusion? Let any one refer to the volume entitled "The Millennial Kingdom," of the Bloomsbury "Advent Lectures," delivered by some of the most eminent Church of England clergymen of the day, and they will see more or less clearly that this unscriptural notion pervades the whole of these discourses. Indeed, the Rev. W. R. Freemantle, Rector of Clayton, Buckinghamshire, and President of the Prophecy Investigation Society-and under whose editorial auspices the volume is issued—distinctly states in his preface that one of the leading ideas of the Lectures is, among others, to show that the curse will be removed during the Millennial period of the world; while the Rev. C. J. Goodhart, of Park Chapel, Chelsea, gives as

the heading of his sermon, "The Removal of the Curse." The curse will not be removed during the Millennium either from man or beast-from the animate or inanimate creation. It needs no elaborate reasoning to prove this. The fact is established in the most conclusive manner by two plain texts of Scripture. The first is in Isaiah, where the prophet says, "The sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." And the word, be it observed, occurs in the very midst of a passage which is a stereotyped one with Millenarians as proving their Millennial hypothesis. But there is another text of Scripture which shows that it is not only on the sinner who is a hundred years old, that the curse will rest in the Millennium: it will rest, in a greater or less measure, on every one, even on the best of God's people, living on the Millennial earth. Paul, in his Epistle to the Galatians, says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Now, is any Millenarian prepared to say, that even in the Millennial state of the earth any one will be found who continueth in all things written in the

book of the law to do them? As, with the solitary exception of our Saviour Himself, no one has ever continued in all things to do them-that is, has never, in a single instance, violated the law either in thought, in word, or in deed-so no one in the Millennium, or in any other period of earth's history, ever will. We shall all continue to sin so long as we are in our present bodies; and similarly-constituted bodies will be possessed by all who live in the Millennial ages. There cannot, therefore, be the removal of the curse from any one in the sense of being freed from its physical effects, until, on the resurrection morn, our bodies are made like unto the glorious body of our Lord. It is because of the curse still resting on us in the sense I have stated, that all our bodies are brought to the dust of death. Death was the first form in which the curse took effect. "On the day that thou eatest thereof"—that is, of the forbidden fruit-" thou shalt surely die," were the words which God addressed to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden. And ever since their fall death has been, so far as this world is concerned, the consummation of the curse. In every death, therefore, which occurs during the Millennium—and then it will be as true as it is now, that "in Adam all die"—there will be furnished fresh proof that the curse is not removed from the earth, so far as mankind are concerned.

With regard to the curse as it relates to the brute creation, a moment's reflection ought to satisfy any Millenarian that it would, in the nature of things, be unreasonable to suppose that it should be removed from them. If, as we have shown, the curse will not be removed from mankind in the Millennial state, and as it was on account of man's transgression that the curse was pronounced, it would be illogical as well us unscriptural to suppose that the brute creation would be restored to the perfect happiness, of its kind, which they enjoyed before Adam fell, while Adam's descendants are still doomed to endure its effects. If, indeed, Millenarian notions respecting the restoration of the brute creation were carried to their legitimate results, those who entertain such notions ought to make it no less a part of their creed, that the brute creation will even be ultimately saved. If the curse was inflicted on them on account of man's sin—which we anti-Millenarians as freely and fully admit as our opponents—it follows, on the Millenarian principle of a restoration of the animal creation, that when our Lord returns in person to our earth, and the people of God are, after the general judgment, introduced into heaven—wherever and whatever according to the diversified opinions of Millenarians that may be—the brute creation ought also to be admitted with the saved of mankind.

Without this, indeed, according to the Millenarian theory, the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea, would not, though sharing in the ruin of man, because of his transgression, be made fully partakers of the redemption provided for him. This may at first sight startle some readers; but it is only tracing Millenarian principles to their logical consequences. And here let me say that many divines, not Millenarians—some of them eminent alike for their piety and their learning—have lived and died in the conviction that animals have souls, and that as they

were visited with the curse because of man's sin-not their own-they will be ultimately saved. Dr. Adam Clarke shared this conviction, and laboured learnedly and zealously to show that it is well grounded. The late Rev. Ingram Cobbin, under whose editorial auspices the "Condensed Commentary on the Bible" was brought out, had marked leanings in the same direction. In the exposition which Mr. Cobbin gives by various eminent Biblical critics of the words "creature," "creation," "the whole creation," etc., in the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, that writer says-"Dr. Adam Clarke has a string of reasonings in reference to the restoration of the brute creation, which is too long to be inserted here. The scope of it is that animals were not made to be miserable,—that they have generally become so by man's fall, and that as from the present constitution of things they cannot have the happiness designed for them in this state, they must have it in another. On this knotty subject the Scripture is silent, because it only reveals to us the way of man's salvation; but," adds Mr.

Cobbin, "the probability of the truth of these conjectures, however much ridiculed by some, is most cordially subscribed by me." Neither Dr. Adam Clarke nor Mr. Cobbin had any predilections in favour of Millenarianism, though thus believing in the salvation of the brute creation; and yet I do not remember meeting with any Millenarian publication in which the same views were advocated,—though the claims of consistency imperatively require that believers in the personal reign should entertain and uphold the same opinions.

But even were Scripture silent in relation to the condition of the brute creation during the Millennium, there is one great fact—a fact, I mean, in the view of a large body of Millenarians—which must be regarded as constituting conclusive proof that the brute creation will not be made partakers of the blessedness of the Millennial state. I refer to the fact, as the Millenarians to whom I allude regard it—that contemporaneously with the commencement of our Lord's visible reign on earth, there will be a restoration of the ritual and ceremonial sacrifices which characterized

the Levitical economy. These, we are told, will continue to be rigidly observed; to be scrupulously practised till the close of the thousand years. This is a comparatively recent feature in the Millenarian system. It was unknown to the Patristic believers in the personal reign of Christ; and was not, so far as I am aware, a part of any Millenarian creed until about two centuries ago. Even then it seemed to meet with very partial acceptance; but within the last thirty years it has made very great progress. I am not sure, indeed, whether a considerable majority of Millenarians at the present moment do not believe in and openly advocate the notion that on the personal return of our Lord to our world, there will be an immediate re-institution of all the sacrifices and observances which were peculiar to the Jewish system. Among them may be mentioned the names of the late Rev. Edward Bickersteth and the Rev. William Trotter. The list of living authors of eminence entertaining the notion is much too extended to be given in full, suffice it to name Mr. Elliott, Dr. Tregelles, Mr. Birks, Mr. B. W.

Newton, Lord Congleton, Mr. Garratt, Mr. Ogilvy, Dr. Leask, Mr. Darby (the chief of the Plymouth Brethren), and, indeed, nearly all the best known Millenarian writers.

The Millenarian belief in the restoration of the Jewish sacrifices and Jewish form of worship generally, is grounded on various portions of the prophetic Scriptures, but especially on the last nine chapters of the book of Ezekiel. It will suffice to quote, as showing the scope of these chapters, the last ten verses of the forty-third chapter :- "And he said unto me, Son of man, thus saith the Lord God; These are the ordinances of the altar in the day when they shall make it, to offer burnt offerings thereon, and to sprinkle blood thereon. And thou shalt give to the priests the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God, a young bullock for a sin offering. And thou shalt take of the blood thereof, and put it on the four horns of it, and on the four corners of the settle, and upon the border round about: thus shalt thou cleanse and purge it. Thou shalt take the bullock also of the sin

offering, and he shall burn it in the appointed place of the house, without the sanctuary. And on the second day thou shalt offer a kid of the goats without blemish for a sin offering; and they shall cleanse the altar, as they did cleanse it with the bullock. When thou hast made an end of cleansing it, thou shalt offer a young bullock without blemish, and a ram out of the flock without blemish. And thou shalt offer them before the Lord, and the priests shall cast salt upon them, and they shall offer them up for a burnt offering unto the Lord. Seven days shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering: they shall also prepare a young bullock, and a ram out of the flock, without blemish. Seven days shall they purge the altar and purify it; and they shall consecrate themselves. And when these days are expired, it shall be, that upon the eighth day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt offerings upon the altar, and your peace offerings; and I will accept you, saith the Lord God."

In my next chapter I shall have to deal with the question as to whether there is any real

ground for the belief in the restoration of the Levitical ceremonies and sacrifices during the Millennium. In the meantime I content myself with saying that all Millenerians of any noteat least, I know of no exceptions-regard the X last nine chapters of Ezekiel as relating exclusively to what will be the state of matters during the thousand years of Christ's reign on the earth. Well then, if the Millenarian view be Scriptural, we are to have a recurrence, for the whole Millennial period of the world's history, of the "bloody sacrifices," as well as of the literal observances which constituted the Levitical dispensation. What, then, comes of the Millenarian theory, that during the whole of the Millennium the entire brute creation will be made partakers, in common with mankind, of the supreme blessedness of that period? It can be no state of happiness in the Millennium to bulls and goats, to heifers and lambs, to doves, and others of the feathered tribe, if they are destined to be, to use the language of John Newton, "on Jewish altars slain." This shedding of blood, though but the blood of brutes, whose tortures

incident to these sacrificial forms of death, ill accord, or rather, do not accord at all, with the Millenarian ideas of the restoration of the animal creation to that state of perfect happiness which they enjoyed in Paradise, so long as our first parents remained in a state of innocence. This one fact triumphantly disproves that part of the Millenarian hypothesis which assumes and asserts that the curse will be removed from the brute creation immediately on the return of our Lord to establish his personal reign on the earth.

With regard to the removal, when Christ comes again, of the curse from mankind, as affirmed so confidently by Millenarians, it was hardly necessary that I should have devoted any arguments of my own to show how utterly groundless the notion is. I will not, though I easily might, add to their number. That there is no Scriptural foundation for the assumption of the removal of the curse from mankind in the Millennial state, is a fact which can be most amply attested by the testimony of Millenarians themselves. This, of course, is strangely inconsistent on their part. Still

they are constrained to confess—indeed, with a stranger inconsistency still, they rather seem pleased to do so—that during the whole of the thousand years, judgments of the most terrible kind will be poured out on the ungodly.

The Millennium, it is of importance further to observe, is to be, from beginning to end, according to Millenarians, "the day of vengeance of the most high God" to vast numbers of those who shall then be on the earth. Disregarding here, as in so many other instances, their own literal interpretation principle, they consider in this case "the day of vengeance" to mean a thousand years of vengeance-"a thousand years being with God as one day." The following passage from the prophecies of Isaiah, beginning with the fifth and ending with the tenth verse of the thirty-fourth chapter, will furnish some idea of the judgments which will be inflicted on the workers of iniquity during the Millennium; for all Millenarians are agreed in the opinion that the passage refers to the Millennial state. "My sword," says God, "shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the

people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the Lord is filled with blood, it is made fat with fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Sion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever."

Who can read this passage without being appalled by its terrible character? And to make it more appalling still, Mr. Goodhart, in his sermon on "The Removal of the Curse," admits that the pouring out of the judgments indicated will know no intermission nor

diminution during the whole of the Millennial state.

A state of great guilt in the sight of God during the Millennium, and consequently divine displeasure practically expressed, is described in the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth verses of the forty-ninth chapter of the same book of Isaiah: "But thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. And I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine: and all flesh shall know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob." Will any Millenarian seriously say that the state of matters indicated cither in this passage or in the one quoted from the thirty-fourth chapter, can be made to accord with Millenarian views of the holiness and the happiness which they are in the habit of representing as universal characteristics of the Millennial state?

The same state of sin and misery, with the infliction of terrible judgments from God in consequence of sin, as being destined to characterize the Millennial state of the earth, is no less clearly indicated in the last verse of the closing chapter of the same book. "And they," the people of Israel in their Millennial condition, "shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Surely it will be difficult-might I not rather say impossible—for any amount of Millenarian ingenuity to reconcile this passage of Scripture with the measure of holiness and happiness which all Millenarians concur in representing as the certain characteristics of the world's condition. And this is only one, as those before given are but few out of many, which prove that the world in the Millennial period of its history will fall very far short of those glowing pictures of Paradisiacal beauty and blessedness which the fertile imaginations of Millenarian writers present to us.

But it is not alone in the case of the ungodly who shall live during the Millennium that there will be suffering and sorrow, as the result of still remaining sin. Even the Israel of God will know in a greater or less measure what it is to be unhappy in the Millennial state. I have now lying before me a small Millenarian publication, without the author's name, entitled "Evidences as to the Futurity of the Kingdom of God," and which begins with the assertion, in italics, that "the kingdom of God is not yet in existence." In this small publication numerous quotations are given from Scripture to show that the Millennium will be a glorious and blessed state. One is from the twentieth chapter of Ezekiel, and is as follows:-"And I will bring you into the wilderness of the people, and there will plead with you face to face. Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord God. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant. And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me: and I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the land of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the Lord."

This, it is important to observe, is a passage of Scripture which Millenarians themselves quote as decidedly supporting their views. Now we all know how God "pleaded" with the Israelites in the wilderness. It was by a succession of corrective dispensations of his providence of the most serious kind; and it is here distinctly stated that He is in the Millennium to "plead" with his restored people in the same way. This view is further confirmed by the expression that He will cause them "to pass under the rod"; in other words, that He will chastise them with a view to their correction. In the Millenarian publication I have named, the writer quotes, with the view of proving that during the period of Christ's personal reign on earth the people of God will be blessed beyond all conception, the eleventh verse of the thirtieth chapter of Jeremiah, where God is represented as saying, "Though I make a full end of all other nations

whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." These two portions of Scripture, I repeat, are admitted by believers in the personal reign of Christ to refer to the period when his kingdom shall have come, . and He Himself has been seated on his throne in Jerusalem. In the latter quotation it will be observed, that the phrase "full end" occurs—a phrase which denotes that God will, in the circumstances, deal severely with his people! a view which is further borne out by the other expression, that they will not be allowed to go altogether unpunished. Surely such passages of Scripture as these ought to modify the terms in which some Millenarians speak of the blessedness of the Millennial state. They speak of it as if it will hardly fall short in holiness and happiness of heaven itself. How they can reconcile to themselves their views on this point with the two passages of Scripture under consideration-and I might have quoted many more to the same effect-it is not for me to say.

I have said that there is not to be a moment's interruption to this series of appalling judgments. On this point most Millenarians are agreed. No one can take up a Millenarian publication without finding that great prominence is given to this part of the Millenarian system. I will content myself with a single Millenarian testimony to the correctness of my representations on this point: it is from Mr. Brooks' "Essays on the Advent and Kingdom of Christ." Mr. Brooks - the italics and small capitals are his says:-"Thus it is manifest, that the period of judgment will extend through the Millennium; during which all unrighteousness, and everything which exalts itself against God, will be subdued. The saints will then also participate with Jesus in this rule and sovereignty over 'the nations that remain,' and will apparently be made instrumental also in inflicting the vengeance upon those nations, which at its commencement receive condign punishment. Such is the burden of the testimony in the one hundred and forty-ninth Psalm, which declares that they have 'a two. edged sword in their hand to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishment upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written-This Honour HAVE ALL HIS SAINTS.' It is implied also in the second chapter of Revelation, twenty-sixth verse, wherein it is promised to them 'power over the nations'; whom, it is said, 'they shall rule with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers.' Again it is written, 'Ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet'; 'the righteous shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked: all which passages, however studded with metaphor, or couched in symbols, indicate that a coercive power and restraint shall be exercised at that time by the righteous."

It will be observed, from this quotation from the writings of the Millenarian Mr. Brooks, that the terrible judgments which are thus to be poured on the ungodly during the whole period of the Millennium, are to be inflicted mainly by means of the glorified saints. Not only so, but nearly all Millenarians are in

complete accord in representing this infliction of the most appalling judgments imaginable on sinners during the Millennium, as if they took an inexpressible delight in rendering those whose natures are the same as their own once were, wretched beyond all thought. The Scriptural expression, "This honour have all the saints," is a phrase quoted by Millenarians, as if the fact of their being made the instruments of rendering the ungodly men and women on the earth the subjects of misery far surpassing in its intensity anything of which we can form a conception,—were to be one of the chief sources of their bliss in their glorified state. I confess that my own mind recoils at the idea that God's glorified saints will thus be made the instruments of subjecting those whose natures are the same as their own originally were, to sorrows and sufferings of the most appalling kind which ever entered into the mind of man to conceive. My only consolation is, that the passages of Scripture quoted by Millenarians in support of their views on this point, admit of some other interpretation than they put

upon them,—although we may not be able to say with confidence what such construction ought to be. I regard the meaning of such passages as among the things which we know not now, but shall know hereafter.

After what I have said, and the proofs I have furnished that my views are equally in accordance with Revelation and reason, relative to the condition of mankind, of the animal creation, and of the physical earth, during the Millennium,-I am sure it cannot be necessary that I should formally point to the conclusion to which my arguments and observations inevitably lead. No attentive and unbiassed reader can fail to perceive that the vivid representations which believers in the personal reign of Christ give of earth's holiness and happiness, - a happiness equally shared by mankind and the animal creation,are mere fancy pictures, not having even the semblance of a foundation, save what may be supposed to be furnished in certain passages of prophetic Scripture which are wrapt up in the most allegorical and figurative forms of language which could be conceived.

CHAPTER VIII.

MORAL AND SPIRITUAL STATE OF THE MILLENNIAL EARTH.

THE misconceptions which exist as to the Moral and Spiritual condition of the Millennial earth are no less great and grievous than those which prevail among Millenarians as to its physical and social state. The bulk of modern Millenarians represent the world as destined to be, in its Millennial condition, universally moral and religious in the highest sense of the terms. They describe the Millennium as a state of universal holiness. This is, indeed, their favourite expression in relation to it. I need not quote from the works of the most celebrated Millenarians in proof of this. That would be to transfer portions of their writings from every modern Millenarian author of eminence. The grand representations of a

state of perfect and universal holiness are such passages of Scripture as the following, which I transcribe to my pages from the work of a Millenarian author, to whom I have made repeated references in my work, "The End of all Things." The Millenarian, Mr. Ogilvy, in his volume, "The Day of the Lord," gives the following texts as confirmatory of the conviction so prevalent, though not universal, among Millenarians, that during the personal reign of our Lord on earth, there will be a state of complete and universal holiness:-"I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear into their hearts, and they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my

whole soul." "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Sion with songs and everlasting joy on their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Once more—"Thy people [Israel] also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified."

Dr. M'Neile, Mr. Molyneux, and numerous others of our most popular Millenarian authors,

express themselves on the point in question in terms similar to those employed by Mr. Ogilvy. They explicitly avow their belief that there will be universal holiness during the personal reign of Christ; most of them, however, with a strange inconsistency, making, in other parts of their writings, a virtual admission that there will be *some* sin in the Millennial state of the world.

I have, in the preceding chapter, proved, that so far from there being in the Millennial condition of the world that perfect and universal holiness which the writers I have named, and many other Millenarians, maintain there will be, grounding their belief on such expressions as that, "they shall not depart from me," that is, God, and that "they shall be all righteous," -sin will prevail to no inconsiderable extent. The moral and spiritual condition of those who live during the Millennium will fall very far short not only of that moral and spiritual perfection which some Millenarians teach us to expect, but the standard of attainment in holiness which will be reached, will not be even of so high a kind as other Millenarians

affirm it will be found. Mingled with the holiness which will, I admit, generally characterize the Millennial condition of the earth, there will, I repeat, be no inconsiderable amount of iniquity. If, indeed, there were to be no sin in the Millennial state; if iniquity should then be banished from the world, and all the inhabitants thereof were to be righteous, then there would neither be suffering nor death; for suffering and death, as I have before shown, are the consequences of sin. But I will not travel anew, in relation to this phase of the Millenarian question, over the ground which I have already trodden. I am sure it is not necessary. I am satisfied that after what I have said on the point, and the acquaintance which the reader has with what "saith the Scripture" in relation to it, no one will doubt the existence of sin and its inevitable results during the thousand years of Millennial bliss and glory.

Before, however, entirely quitting this aspect of the question, it is right to remark, that not only will there be sin in the Millennum among the inhabitants of the world

generally, but there will be great and grievous guilt even among the Israelites themselves, whom, we are told, by the concurrent testimony of Millenarians, will be much more glorious and much more privileged than the other people, and kindreds, and tribes who will inhabit the earth in its Millennial state. In the same forty-third chapter of Ezekiel, regarded by all Millenarians as a thoroughly Millenarian chapter, we have repeated intimations of the most explicit kind, that there will, while Christ reigns personally on earth, be no small amount of sin among the Jews,though to be exalted above all other nations. "Thou son of man," it is said in the tenth verse, "show the house," that is, the temple, "to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities." It is added in the succeeding verse, "And if they be ashamed of all that they have done, show them the form of the house." In the sixth verse of the forty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel, the children of Israel are spoken of as "rebellious." The command of God to the prophet was, that he should say "to the rebellious, even to the

house of Israel, O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations." The chapter is full of complaints on the part of God against his people—even against the priests of the tribe of Levi, the most favoured of all the tribes—because they had departed from his ways. And with these complaints there are threatenings of punishments. Now this most clearly proves, that not only among the Gentile portion of earth's inhabitants during the Millennium, but even among the most privileged of the Israelites, there will be the prevalence of no inconsiderable amount of iniquity.

It is important, it should be further borne in mind, that the charge of iniquity thus brought home to Israel in the Millenarian state of the world, is not preferred against individuals, nor even against a collection of the Israelites, but against them as a body. "It is of the house of Israel," meaning the Israelites as a people, that the prophet, by the special command of God, speaks in the language which I have quoted. Who, then, are we to believe? The prophet Ezekiel—and other Old

Testament writers express themselves to the same effect—when he charges the Israelites with sinning grievously against God during the Millennium, or Mr. Molyneux, and other Millenarians, when they declare in the most emphatic and most positive terms, that the Israelites shall all be righteous, every one perfectly holy, in the Millennial state?

But in connection with the moral and spiritual condition of the inhabitants of the Millennial earth, there occurs the question, What will be the external form of their public worship?

This is a very important question in relation to the Millennial state. And it is not only of great but of growing importance, because of the rapidly-extending conviction in Millenarian regions that there will be, in the Millennial condition of the world, not only a new and glorious temple, but a restoration of all the rites and sacrifices, and other forms of worship which characterized the Levitical dispensation. I had occasion in my last chapter to mention this fact, but without dwelling on it, because I had to show, that if this notion

be correct,—namely, that bulls, and goats, and heifers, and lambs, and other animals, will be again slain on Jewish altars, as in Old Testament times—there can be no restoration of the brute creation to the state of happiness in Paradise, in which they were before Adam fell, which restoration of the animal creation at the personal advent of Christ is part of the creed of all Millenarians. But viewing the matter in relation to the form of worship which the majority of modern Millenarians concur in believing will universally prevail during the personal reign of Christ, it will be necessary that the reader should be furnished with precise statements as to what that worship will be. The prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zechariah, and one or two other Old Testament writers, refer in more or less definite language to this point; but as Ezekiel is the prophet whose writings Millenarians chiefly refer to as predicting the certainty of the restoration of the Jewish services and sacrifices, and describing their nature, I will confine myself to the representations of that prophet on the subject. I pass by the details furnished by Ezekiel from the eighteenth

to the last verse of the forty-third chapter, because I have already quoted that passage, as it bears on the happiness of the brute creation during the Millennium. I simply ask my readers to turn back to the pages in which it is given, in order that by re-perusing what the prophet there says on the point, in connection with what I am now about to quote, they may thoroughly understand this element in the system of modern Millenarianism. I pass over the fortieth, forty-first, forty-second, and part of the forty-third chapters, which are appropriated to a description of the new temple which is to be erected when our Lord returns, and to various matters therewith connected. leaving the reader to consult for himself what is said respecting the building of the temple, and things appertaining to it.

With regard to the priests, all of whom are to be of the tribe of Levi, and the sons of Zadok, they must rigidly conform to the rules laid down for their guidance, even in relation to their costume. "And it shall come to pass," says Ezekiel, in the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth verses

of the forty-fourth chapter, "That when they enter in at the gates of the inner court, they shall be clothed with linen garments; and no wool shall come upon them, whilst they minister in the gates of the inner court, and within. They shall have linen bonnets upon their heads, and shall have linen brecches upon their loins; they shall not gird themselves with any thing that causeth sweat. And when they go forth into the utter court, even into the utter court to the people, they shall put off their garments wherein they ministered, and lay them in the holy chambers, and they shall put on other garments; and they shall not sanctify the people with their garments. Neither shall they shave their heads, nor suffer their locks to grow long; they shall only poll their heads."

The most detailed account of the sacrifices and ceremonies which are to characterize the form of worship which is to prevail in the Millennial era of the world is furnished in the forty-fifth chapter, beginning at the thirteenth verse, and ending with the close of the chapter. "This," says the prophet, "is the

oblation that ye shall offer: the sixth part of an ephah of an homer of wheat, and ve shall give the sixth part of en ephah of an homer of barley: concerning the ordinance of oil, the bath of oil, ye shall offer the tenth part of a bath out of the cor, which is an homer of ten baths; for ten baths are an homer: And one lamb out of the flock, out of two hundred, out of the fat pastures of Israel; for a meat offering, and for a burnt offering, and for peace offerings, to make reconciliation for them, saith the Lord God. All the people of the land shall give this oblation for the prince of Israel. And it shall be the prince's part to give burnt offerings, and meat offerings, and drink offerings, in the feasts, and in the new moons, and in the Sabbaths, in all solemnities of the house of Israel: he shall prepare the sin offering, and the meat offering, and the burnt offering, and the peace offerings, to make reconciliation for the house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord God; In the first month, in the first day of the month, thou shalt take a young bullock without blemish, and cleanse the sanctuary: And the priest shall take of

the blood of the sin offering, and put it upon the posts of the house, and upon the four corners of the settle of the altar, and upon the posts of the gate of the inner court. And so thou shalt do the seventh day of the month for every one that erreth, and for him that is simple: so shall ye reconcile the house. In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten. And upon that day shall the prince prepare for himself and for all the people of the land a bullock for a sin offering. And seven days of the feast he shall prepare a burnt offering to the Lord, seven bullocks and seven rams without blemish daily the seven days; and a kid of the goats daily for a sin offering. And he shall prepare a meat offering of an ephah for a bullock, and an ephah for a ram, and an hin of oil for an ephah. In the seventh month, in the fifteenth day of the month, shall he do the like in the feast of the seven days, according to the sin offering, according to the burnt offering, and according to the meat offering, and according to the oil."

Other parts of the closing chapters of Ezekiel contain, in detached places, equally minute instructions as to the mode in which the ceremonial and sacrificial worship is to be offered to God during the Millennium. Among other things not mentioned in the passages I have quoted, which are to be strictly adhered to, and the observance of which is, indeed, imperatively enjoined, is circumcision. God Himself on this point is brought before us by the prophet as addressing him in these words: -"And thou shalt say," see sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth verses of the forty-fourth chapter, "And thou shalt say to the rebellious, even to the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; O ye house of Israel, let it suffice you of all your abominations. In that ye have brought into my sanctuary strangers, uncircumcised in heart, and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary, to pollute it, even my house, when ye offer my bread, the fat and the blood, and they have broken my covenant because of all your abominations. And ye have not kept the charge of mine holy things: but ye have

set keepers of my charge in my sanctuary for yourselves. Thus saith the Lord God; No stranger, uncircumcised in heart, nor uncircumcised in flesh, shall enter into my sanctuary, of any stranger that is among the children of Israel. And the Levites that are gone away far from me, when Israel went astray, which went astray away from me after their idols; they shall even bear their iniquity."

Such is the mode of publicly worshipping God, which Millenarians tell us will universally prevail throughout the Millennium. It will be observed that it is a purely Jewish form of worship. It is the Levitical dispensation re-established in all its minuteness of detail, and all the rigidity of its requirements. There is not a particle—not even the semblance of a particle—of the Christian system in it. The religion of the New Testament which our Lord established when on earth, and which, with more or less of a worldly admixture in it, has since been the religion of all who profess their faith in Christ—is as entirely ignored as if there never had been a Christian creed,

or form of worship. Not only, indeed, is Christianity never, even indirectly, alluded to in the religion and public worship which are to be exclusively the religion of the Millennium, but Christ Himself is as entirely excluded from it as if our Lord had never existed. Some, indeed, of the most eminent of our modern Millenarians have boldly made the avowal, that the Christian system will be entirely superseded by a purely Jewish form of worship in the Millennial state. Among the number is Mr. Birks. In his chapter entitled, "The Dispensation of Grace," in his "Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," he thus expresses himself with regard to the Christian sacraments:-"With regard to the Christian sacraments, there can be no doubt that these ordinances of grace will cease and determine at the second coming of the Lord. They are special and positive institutions of the gospel, as circumcision and the passover were legal ordinances, and naturally terminate with the dispensation which gave them birth. The question at issue relates to the substantial work of redemption, the intercession of Christ,

and the work of the Spirit, and subordinately to these, the continued efficacy of the Word of God. Are we taught that these will terminate or that they will endure for ever? And is the distinction between their real continuance, and their continuance for a saving purpose, warranted by the texts to which the appeal is made?"

The manifest meaning of this extract from Mr. Birks' writings is, that the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper are to be superseded during the whole period of the Millennium by circumcision and the passover. The very idea engenders feelings in my own mind much too painful to be expressed. dying command of Christ, given on the institution of the Sacrament of the Supper, "Do this in remembrance of Me," will, according to Mr. Birks and those Millenarians, who, in this matter, think with him, cease to be obligatory, the moment the Millennium commences, on his disciples. I had thought—rather let me say I believe with all my heart—that the obligation to show forth, by sitting down at his table, "the Lord's death till He come"

at the end of all things, was to be alike binding and perpetual. I can picture to myself what will be the emotions which the very idea of being thus for ever deprived of the high and holy privilege of partaking of the symbols of Christ's broken body and shed blood, must inspire in the bosom of every believer in Christ, when he looks back on those seasons of sweet communion with his Saviour which he has enjoyed when sitting at his table.

But one's feelings revolt at the whole system of Jewish worship which, we are told, is to be revived at the beginning of the Millennium, and to last till the thousand years are ended. Let any of my readers only picture to himself what a contrast there will be between that form of worship, and the worship which Christ Himself has appointed to be practised in the present dispensation. We know from repeated statements in the Word of God that the rites and ceremonies which were enjoined on the people of God under the Mosaic dispensation were so burdensome that it was almost impossible to carry them out in

practice. Paul said of them that they constituted a voke which neither the Jews of his day, nor their fathers were able to bear. And yet we are told, and that by many learned and good men, that all the people of God, on the return of Christ to establish his kingdom in our world, are to become Jews, so far as their faith and their forms of worship are concerned. They are to have the yoke put upon their necks which proved intolerable to the Israelites of old. The very supposition coming from the lips and pens of eminent Christians causes a revulsion in my mind which I cannot describe. And so it does in the minds of all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, when it is first brought before them. I affirm with confidence, from what I know of Millenarian experiences on the point, that there is not at this moment a single believer in the restoration of the Jewish temple, veremonies, and sacrifices, who was not painfully shocked when the notion was first brought before him. But the necessities of the Millenarian system require that Millenarians should believe in the re-institution of the Levitical economy, because that system is based on the principle that the Scriptures are to be received in their literal sense, and consequently, as nothing could be more specific than the language of Ezekiel, in his closing chapters, in relation to the rebuilding of the Jewish temple, and the restoration of the Jewish ceremonies and sacrifices,—they are bound to believe that what the prophet describes in the chapters in question will literally take place.

Before making those remarks on the chapters of Ezekiel to which I have thus called attention, which naturally suggest themselves, let us apply to them the favourite test of the meaning of Scripture which Millenarians themselves lay down. I need not say that I refer to the literal interpretation test, or principle. Now it so happens that the last nine chapters of Ezekiel are those which, of all other portions of the Old Testament, they most energetically insist should be received literally. Some, indeed, of the more zealous Millenarians actually work themselves up into a state of feeling which they regard as holy indignation, when anyone suggests that the

chapters in question may not possibly admit of the strictly literal construction which Millenarians put upon them. Well then, if they insist on the application of the literal principle to the chapters generally, we have a right that that principle of interpretation be applied, not to such portions only as they may select, but to every portion. They cannot object to this. At least, they have no right to do so.

First of all, then, let us see how the literal principle will stand a rigid application to what is recorded in the thirty-ninth chapter, relative to the great battle of Gog and Magog which is to take place at the close of the Millennium. The passage is so well known that I need not quote it in its entirety. So terrible is this battle destined to be that we are told that the weapons which the Israelites will gather after the battle is over left on the field of conflict by the enemy, will furnish them with fuel for seven years. We are told in the ninth and tenth verses, "That they that dwell in cities of Israel shall go forth, and shall set on fire and burn the weapons, both the shields

and the bucklers, the bows and the arrows, and the handstaves, and the spears, and they shall burn them with fire seven years: So that they shall take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any out of the forests; for they shall burn the weapons with fire: and they shall spoil those that spoiled them, and rob those that robbed them, saith the Lord God."

Grotius thinks that the words here translated "seven years" might, with more propriety have been rendered, "many years." But we will accept the term of "seven years" as here given. Well, then, are Millenarians, after due deliberation, prepared to accept the language of the prophet in this instance as stating literally the fact, that those dwelling in "the cities of Israel" shall be provided with so large a supply of fuel from the armories of Israel's enemies, gathered after the great battle,—as that they shall, during the specified period of seven years, require no other fuel, and "take no wood out of the field, neither cut down any of the forests"? If our Millenarian friends will unreservedly accept the literal interpretation here, are they

also prepared to accept in its literal sense the statement in the twelfth verse, that "seven months shall the house of Israel be burying of them," that is, of those of the army of Gog and Magog left dead on the field of battle? Would it not in all probability be a more correct rendering of the phrases, "seven years" in the one instance, and "seven months" in the other, if we understand them in the sense which attaches to the word "seven" in many other parts of Scripture, as being a definite put for an indefinite number? Apart from the exceedingly long term in either instance, it is certainly, to say the least, exceedingly improbable that the time required for the two operations specified should be exactly "seven years" in the one case, and "seven months" in the other.

But the difficulty attending a literal interpretation of the passage does not end here. There is no point on which there is a greater unanimity of opinion among Millenarians than on this—that *immediately* after the battle of Gog and Magog, and the discomfiture and almost total destruction of the enemies of

Israel, will come the general judgment. It is then for Millenarians to reconcile this fact with their literal interpretation of the phrase, "seven years," in the passage under consideration. If such a rendering be correct, the general judgment will not occur for at least "seven years," a supposition at variance with what the Scripture, in other places, says on the subject.

It appears to me extraordinary that men eminent for their learning and ability, and withal for their judgment on other phases of revealed religion, should bring themselves to accept in a literal sense those portions of the Word of God, which, when so interpreted, give a seeming sanction to the restoration, at the commencement of the Millennium, of the Jewish form of divine worship. It seems strange that they cannot see the inconsistency of understanding literally certain portions of Scripture, with which are mingled other portions which they are constrained to confess cannot be literally interpreted. To give another instance. Some of the ablest theologians that have ever identified themselves with the

Millenarian principles, have, for example, admitted that the stream of water is not to be literally understood, which Ezekiel describes, in his forty-seventh chapter, as issuing from beneath the temple to be rebuilt by Christ, and as being not only of unfathomable depth, but as restoring the waters of the Dead Sea, and as diffusing life wherever it pursues its course. The concluding verse of the passage, in which the prophet presents us with this description, is as follows:-" And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."

If this is to be understood literally, it can only be so on the supposition that a perpetual miracle will be wrought to produce the specified results. Dr. Gill is one of those distinguished Millenarian divines who give up the literal interpretation here. He understands

· the passage to denote what the happy state of the Millennial earth will be, from the preaching of the gospel and the prevalence of gospel principles during the thousand years of Christ's personal reign. Archbishop Newcombe, another Millenarian, expresses himself to the same effect in his work on Ezekiel. "The gradual rise of the waters," he says, "denotes the gradual progress of the gospel." In relation to the other expression, "the waters shall be healed," this same Millenarian archbishop adopts the language of Prebendary Lowth, who remarks that they will be so "mystically," the words "denoting the healing virtues of God's grace, or the gospel, to cure the vices and corruptions of nature." It is of great importance that some of the leading Millenarians do thus concede that portions of the chapters in question do not admit of a literal interpretation, but must be understood in a figurative sense. Mr. Thomas Scott, in relation to this point, most justly says, in his exposition of the phrase in question, "This part of the vision must be understood figuratively, which is important in

forming a determination concerning the import of the whole vision." It is clear that if this part of the chapter cannot be construed in a literal sense, we cannot concede to Millenarians their right to insist on a literal construction being put on those other parts of the series of nine chapters, of which this is a portion, and which constitutes the chief foundation on which Millenarians rest their belief in a restoration of all the Jewish ceremonies and sacrifices in the Millennial condition of the world.

It is not only surprising, as I have said, but lamentable beyond what language can express, that there should be found so many—indeed that there should be any—gifted men, of the highest order of piety, who can persist in the uniform application of a principle of interpretation of God's Word which logically lands them in such deplorable difficulties. I trust that my non-Millenarian readers will see an irresistible conclusiveness in the position I am maintaining—namely, that if the literal principle of interpretation of the Scriptures cannot be made to apply to the passages to

which I have called attention, Millenarians have no right to apply that principle to those other parts of the same connected series of chapters which they think sanctions their Millenarian views.

Seeing that I cannot receive the chapters in question in a literal sense, it is probable I shall be asked what view, then, do I myself take of them? I confess there is a difficulty here, and would, therefore, speak with all diffidence on the point. In general terms I would simply say that there are certain considerations in connection with the book of Ezekiel in its prophetic parts which are entitled to some weight in the endeavour to understand particular parts of it. First of all, it is next to the Revelation, confessedly the most allegorical book in the Bible. It is also admitted on all hands that it is, as a whole, the most difficult book in the Old Testament to comprehend. On this ground the late Duke of Manchester-who was, be it borne in mind, a decided Millenarian-rejected the inspiration of the book altogether, and expressed a wish that it should not be received by the church of Christ as possessing canonical authority; just as the late Dr. Arnold denied the inspiration of the book of Daniel, and advocated its exclusion from the Bible, because there was so much in it that had baffled all the powers of the most learned theologians to explain, or even to catch a glimpse of its meaning. No one, I am sure, will for a moment suppose that I have any sympathy with the views of either the late Duke of Manchester, or of the late Dr. Arnold in relation to the books of Ezekiel and Daniel. In inferring the non-inspiration of any book or part of Scripture from the fact of our being unable to comprehend its import, would, I hold, be one of the most illogical deductions ever made from any given premises. I would simply suggest, as a fact worthy of consideration, that there are many passages, both in the Old and New Testaments, which cannot, without doing the greatest violence to all our notions of the meaning of words, be accepted in their literal signification, and yet which all admit to have a meaning. The meaning of some such passages has,

indeed, been made clear by the interpretation of accomplished facts. I have in my first volume given a lengthened list of passages which do not admit of a literal construction, and yet are received by Christians of all denominations as inspired portions of the Word of God.

In connection with the difficulty which is confessedly found in the portion of Ezekiel under consideration, it may be well to advert for a moment to the impossibility of rendering other passages in accordance with the language, in its literal signification, of the inspired writer's. Events, for example, which did not occur for seven hundred years afterwards are spoken of by the prophet Isaiah as if they were things of the past. We have one illustration of this in relation to the incarnation of Christ. In the sixth verse of the ninth chapter of that prophet's book, the birth of Jesus is thus spoken of as having already taken place:-"Unto us a child is born; unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." In the first verse of the fortieth chapter of the same prophetic writings, we again read concerning our Lord of things having already taken place which did not occur until He commenced his public ministry:—"Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him." Here we have what took place in the time of Christ's sojourn on earth, spoken of as events that were past, and yet we know that they did not take place for seven centuries afterwards.

I might cite various instances from the prophetic writings of things which were to be future, as being spoken of in the past tense. One will suffice. It is contained in the beautiful fifty-third chapter of the book of Isaiah. The sufferings and sorrows of our Lord when in our world, his death and burial, are all spoken of, not as things to occur, but as having already taken place:

—"He is," says the prophet, "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were

our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him: and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not his mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken. And He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him "

All this taken according to the literal inter-

pretation principle points to past events. We cannot, therefore, blame the Jews of Isaiah's day, nor the Jews of the present day, neither those who lived in the intervening two thousand five hundred years, for understanding the chapter in question as referring solely to the past persecutions which the Israelites of previous times had undergone, and the calamities which had befallen them. This is the interpretation which a learned Jew some years ago gave me privately, and which he afterwards brought out in great detail, and with a show of great erudition, in a commentary which he published on the prophecies of Isaiah.

Then again, as furnishing another instance of the frequency with which language occurs in the prophetic Scripture which cannot be interpreted literally, but which we know to express facts, let me mention two portions of the writings of prophets in which things are seemingly foretold which had already occurred many ages previously. In the fifteenth verse of the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, that prophet represents God as intend-

ing at some future unspecified period to "utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea," adding that "with his mighty wind shall He shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dryshod." Here we have as correct a description as could be given in the same number of words, of the Israelites passing over the Red Sea dryshod. And yet the event is represented as destined to occur. although it had taken place nearly eight centuries before the time of Isaiah. We have a repetition of the same thing in relation to the same event, in the writings of the prophet Zechariah, centuries after the words we have quoted from Isaiah were written by him. God Himself is represented as the speaker, and He says, in the tenth and eleventh verses of Zechariah's tenth chapter-"I will bring them again also out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Assyria; and I will bring them into the land of Gilead and Lebanon: and place shall not be found for them. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea, and all

the deeps of the river shall dry up: and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."

Even in the very chapter of Ezekiel to which I have been adverting, there is a difficulty different from any to which I have called attention, which ought to modify the faith which our Millenarian friends have in the almost universal applicability of the literal interpretation principle. God says of the Israelites, whom Millenarians agree in representing as so holy and so happy during the thousand years, that He had consumed them in his anger, because they had committed grievous sins, which are specified. This occurs in the latter clause of the eighth verse. In the very next verse He says, that if they will forsake their sins, He "will dwell in the midst of them for ever." Now, both these statements, put by the prophet into the mouth of God Himself, cannot be literally true. God could not "dwell in the midst" of those whom He Himself represents in the very previous verse to have "consumed." In this one fact we have a conclusive argument against the necessity of adopting literally all that is said in other parts of the chapter, and in the chapters which follow, respecting the rebuilding of the temple, and the restoration of Jewish sacrifices and services, in all the rigidity by which they were characterized under the Levitical dispensation.

The above are passages of Scripture, with the considerations to which they naturally give rise, which I would earnestly commend to the attention of our Millenarian friends. Their great mistake is to insist on our giving a satisfactory meaning to particular passages of Scripture, if we object to their being literally interpreted. This is a most unreasonable requirement. There is neither logic nor justice in it. We may be able to prove triumphantly -at least to our satisfaction-that portions of the Bible which, they contend, establish the truth of their system, do not admit of a literal construction, and yet we may not be able to say with confidence what is the real meaning of such passages of Scripture. Peter said of Paul's writings-which were penned amidst much greater light than were any of the Old

Testament Scriptures—that there were some things in them hard to be understood. No doubt, the writings of Paul referred to by Peter were misunderstood in the days of the latter apostle. Indeed, we know they were, from what Paul himself said to the Thessalonians, in his second epistle, respecting their grievous misconstruction of what he had said in his first epistle. Yet, because we cannot correctly comprehend any particular passage which is a favourite one with Millenarians, it does not follow that such passage is to be received according to its literal language. In consonance with this view, we may be able to prove conclusively that the chapters of Ezekiel, to which we have been adverting, cannot be interpreted literally, and, consequently, give no sanction to the Millenarian system, though unable to furnish such an explanation of them as will be generally accepted as satisfactory.

Everywhere in the New Testament we read of Christ being the only Priest, as well as the great High Priest of those who believe in Him. I need quote no texts in confirmation of

this. It is said of Jesus what cannot be said of any merely human priest, that He is able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Yet He of whom this is said, is, according to the Millenarian theory, to be superseded in his priestly office by priests who, so far from being able to save sinners to the uttermost, will never be able to save a single sinner at all. They will themselves be sinners as much needing salvation by God's grace and Christ's intercession, as the greatest transgressor that ever lived or ever will live in the world. The apostle further says, that "the High Priest who became us," should be "holy, harmless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." The priests, who, according to Millenarian assumptions, are to officiate in the temple at Jerusalem in the Millennial dispensation, will possess none of these requirements. It is added that it became Christ that He should not need daily to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people; for thus, we are told, "He did once when He

offered up Himself." Not that He offered sacrifice for his own sins-for that He could not do, because He was sinless-but for the sins of all who should believe on Him from the hour of his death till the day of judgment. This, it is unnecessary to say, cannot be predicated of any of those who shall fill the office of the priesthood in the Millennium when the Jewish sacrifices and all the concomitant rites and ceremonies which appertained to the Levitical dispensation, shall be fully restored. But in addition to all this, it is a distinguishing feature in the Christian system that our Lord is to retain his priestly character for ever, that is, until the time when He has brought the last of his blood-bought people to glory. "He abideth," we are told, "a priest continually": He "hath an unchangeable priesthood"; "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." It is amazing that with such explicit statements as these respecting the intercessory character of Christ, any reader of the Word of God should accept a system which in effect supersedes the priestly character of Christ, and substitutes a new priesthood for his.

I cannot believe that those who have been led to embrace the extraordinary notion that the great characteristic of the personal reign of Christ will be the rebuilding of Jerusalem, including the temple, and the restoration of all the rites, and ceremonies, and forms of worship which prevailed during the Levitical dispensation, can, in doing so, had present to their minds the great distinguishing features of the Christian dispensation. Christ Himself, on all occasions, spoke of the Jewish religion, so far as related to its outward observances, its meats and drinks, its new moons, and animal sacrifices, as a religion which was to be for ever done away, and his own religion to take its Instead of the only acceptable worshippers being those who worshipped at Jerusalem, they were to consist of all, of every nation, and colour, and clime, who worshipped God as a Spirit, in spirit and in truth. Jesus expressed Himself to the effect that God only seeketh, or only will accept, the worship of those who do worship Him in spirit and in truth. But in the Millennial state of the earth, if our Millenarian friends are correct in

their views, the only acceptable worship which can be offered to God will be an imposing and yet most minute system of ritual observances. Those who acquiesce in this belief are, it is evident, most inconsistent in the aversion which they express in relation to that extreme ritualism which has of late become so prevalent in our Anglican places of worship. If the Millenarian theory be correct, Puseyites are but practically anticipating the extreme ritualism which is to be the only mode of worship during the Millennial era of the world; and therefore it is inconsistent on the part of evangelical divines in the Church of England holding Millenarian principles, to be found among those who preach and write against a ritual religion.

We are told in the New Testament that the Jewish dispensation was but the shadow of good things to come,—meaning by "good things to come" the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, the most prominent feature of which is its simplicity. Yet, according to modern Millenarianism, the gospel dispensation is the return of its divine Founder and great subject, to be in its turn done away, and to be replaced by the Jewish form of worship which it superseded. Is this, let me ask Millenarians, like the wisdom or the ways of God?

The language of Paul in the third chapter of this Second Epistle to the Corinthians shows, by the contrast which he institutes between the Old and New Testament dispensations, the incomparable superiority of the latter over the former. "God," he says, beginning at the sixth and ending at the eleventh verse, "hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: how shall the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that

excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious."

In point of glory, it is plain from this, that there was no comparison between the dispensation of Moses and that of Christ; but in addition to this, it is distinctly stated in the eleventh verse, that while the former has been done away, the latter remaineth, by which word we are justified in assuming is meant to be understood that "the ministration of the Spirit," as the gospel dispensation, is to be perpetuated till the end of time. Even apart from the apostle's statement to this effect, it would be matter of fair inference that the dispensation which is here declared to be so much the more glorious of the two would not be "done away" as Millenarians tell us it will be, in order that the less glorious dispensation may be reinstituted in its place.

Millenarians are free and frequent in their quotations from Paul's writings when, as in the case, for example, of his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, they are supposed to favour the personal reign hypothesis, and other parts of the Millenarian system. But I do not remember ever to have met in any Millenarian volume or periodical an endeavour, on their part, to reconcile the Epistle to the Galatians with their belief in the restoration of Jewish sacrifices and the Mosaic ritual generally. The main purpose of the apostle in that epistle seems to have been to expose the errors and arrest the progress of those Judaizing principles and predilections which prevailed in the churches in Galatia. It was in reference to the Judaizing teachers who had crept into the Galatian churches that Paul employed the strong language which he made use of in the eighth verse of his first chapter, and which he emphatically repeated in the ninth verse. "But," he says, "though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that we have received, let him he accursed."

Those Judaizing teachers to whom allusion is here made, are spoken of in the fourth verse

of the second chapter, as "false brethren," who sought to deprive the Galatians of the liberty which they had in Christ Jesus, and to bring them again into bondage. In accordance with the strong feelings which Paul had on this point, he publicly and emphatically condemned the conduct of Peter, for sacrificing his principles as a minister of Christ, to the prejudices of Jewish converts. He sums up his righteous indignation against those who sought to substitute the burdensome Jewish ritual for the simplicity of the gospel system of faith and practice in these words:-"But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain." "The weak and beggarly elements!" These are remarkable words as applicable to that system of bondage to which the churches in Galatia sought again to turn. And it is to these that Millenarians tell us the whole world will be brought

when Christ comes the second time to our world. Surely, if such is destined to be the case, it was strange that Paul should have been so vehement in his condemnation of those who in his day had introduced, or sought to introduce Jewish principles and practices into the churches of Galatia. It is not easy to see how that could be so sinful in Paul's time which is to be the universal religion of the world during the Millennial dispensation,—as we are told that dispensation is to be incomparably helier and more glorious than any that had preceded it.

If I could suppose that any one into whose hands this volume may come, were still inclined to believe in the actual restoration of a strictly Jewish dispensation at the advent of our Lord, I would impress on such person, that there is not a single verse of Scripture in the whole of the New Testament, which even seems to sanction that idea. On the contrary, the entire scope of the New Testament is thoroughly opposed to any such notion, while the Epistle to the Hebrews contains throughout a series of consecutive and conclusive arguments in favour of the perpetuity of the Christian dispensation,

wholly incompatible with the notion I am combating. Let me earnestly ask any one whose mind may be troubled on this point to read prayerfully, and with care, what is said in the Hebrews in reference to it.

The question will naturally occur to those to whom this phase of Millenarianism is new, "Do Millenarians believe that these Jewish sacrifices and services during the personal reign of Christ will have the same expiatory effect as when first instituted under the Levitical dispensation?" To this question there would be an unanimous answer in the negative. They all reject the idea of any atoning efficacy attaching to such sacrifices and services. Millenarians are in complete accord in believing that they will be simply commemorative of Christ's sacrifice of Himself on the cross. It is strange that Millenarians should make this assertion. Believing in the literal restoration of the sacrifices which the Israelites in Old Testament times rendered to God, I cannot understand how they can affirm that such sacrifices do not possess any expiatory virtue. This is all the more mar-

vellous when the fact stares them in the face, that in the very chapter which, more than in any other part of Scripture, the Jewish ritualunderstanding the language of Ezekiel literally -is promised to be re-established,-it is again and again explicitly stated to have an expiatory object in view, and to possess atoning efficacy. In the nineteenth verse it is written-"And thou shalt give to the priests, the Levites that be of the seed of Zadok, which approach unto me, to minister unto me, saith the Lord God, a young bullock for a sin offering." What language could be used which could more plainly express the fact that the Jewish sacrifices, to be restored in Millennial times, are to be, if the literality of the sacrificial services is to be believed in at all, of an expiatory kind? The sin-atoning character of these sacrifices is again, with equal explicitness declared, in the twenty-fifth verse. "Seven days," it is said, "shalt thou prepare every day a goat for a sin offering." And this sin offering, it will be observed, is to be daily presented in the form of a goat prepared for the purpose.

These are solemn statements, which deserve

the solemn consideration of Millenarians. T know their minds would recoil at the idea that there still, contrary to the emphatic affirmation of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, remaineth a sacrifice for sin. They would shudder at the bare idea of believing that anything more than the atonement of Christ was required for the soul's salvation. But if they will persist in receiving the fortythird and the other chapters of Ezekiel towards the end, in a strictly literal sense, they are shut up to the awful necessity of believing that in the Millennial age of the world there will be sacrifices, as in Jewish days of old, not commemorative of the sufferings and death of our Lord, but as sacrifices offered to God for the purpose of their sins being expiated thereby. Surely such solemn considerations as these may well have the effect of leading Millenarians to examine anew the scriptural character of their Millenarian creed.

But the notion of the restoration of Judaism in all the rigour of its forms and observances, as instituted under the Levitical dispensation, is not only unscriptural in sentiment, and at

variance with the very nature of Christianity,it is no less in direct antagonism with the utterances of reason. A recurrence to Judaism would be manifestly incongruous. What-to give only one illustration out of many which might be brought forward, -could be more out of place, what more utterly inappropriate, than that the Christian or Gentile nations should be placed under the most solemn and abiding obligations to celebrate, as often and as earnestly as the Jews, the ordinance of the passover? That institution was, and in the nature of things ever must be, peculiar to the Jews as a people to whom God vouchsafed especial deliverance, and on whom He bestowed national blessings.

It were easy, but it is not necessary, to mention many other parts of the Jewish system of faith and practice which had their origin in the reception of special tokens of the divine favour, and which God most fitly required them to hold in remembrance; but which, if not altogether unintelligible, would be manifestly inappropriate in the case of Christian or heathen nations, when brought to

the knowledge of God. To say, as is popularly believed, that the heathen nations will, in the Millennial dispensation, be brought to the knowledge of Christianity, would according to the Millenarian notion, be obviously a misapprehension; for it is not to the religion of the gospel that they are to be converted, but to the knowledge of the Mosaic dispensation, and the practice of all the Jewish rites. ceremonies, and sacrifices, which are destined. according to modern Millenarianism, to be the great characteristics of the thousand years' personal reign of Christ. And here let me, parenthetically, call attention to the anomaly of Christ being said to be the supreme Sovereign in, and the glory of, the Millennial state, while the religion which He laid down his life to establish on the earth, is to be superseded by the Jewish system as it existed in all its ritual rigour under the Levitical dispensation. These are the inconsistencies, these the incongruities. these the anomalies in which Millenarianism lands its votaries.

But I will not pursue the subject further. The point is one on which I cannot see that

there is any room for argument. The whole scope of the New Testament is at utter variance with the theory of a restoration of the Jewish form of worship when the light of the Millennium first dawns on the earth. It is at irreconcileable antagonism to the genius of the gospel. It is practically saying, that the Christian name is to be blotted out from the religious world's vocabulary, and that Christ Himself is to give place to Moses. All God's people are to become Jews,-to submit to all the burdensome forms and ceremonies, and to offer up all the varied sacrifices which constituted the Levitical dispensation. Christ has no place in this part of the Millenarian scheme. Instead of our Great High Priest who hathpassed into the heavens, there to make intercession for us, being the most prominent figure in the picture of Millennial Jewish worship, which we are confidently assured will be the universal form of worship during the thousand years, He has no place in it at all. We read of priests and of a "prince" performing prominent parts in the service of the temple, but not one word is said of our glorious Priest in those portions of the Old Testament on which Millenarians ground their faith in the restoration of the Levitical form of worship. The "prince" so often spoken of in Ezekiel is supposed by Dr. Adam Clarke, and other commentators, to be the chief priest. To all the priests, tithes, as of old, are to be paid; but he is to have a double share. No offerings of any kind, or in any form, are to be made to Christ. God the Father is to be the sole object of worship. From such a Christless system—from a mode of worship in which our Lord is altogether ignored—my whole moral nature, as I have already said, turns away with feelings of revulsion which I cannot describe.

No sincere and enlightened disciple of Christ could ever have adopted such a creed, if he had but seen the fearful consequences to which it logically leads. The form of worship which we are promised in the Millennium not only consigns to the tomb all the forms which have characterized our common Christianity since the formation of the first Christian Church, but it substitutes, in effect, the blood of bulls and of goats for the blood of

Christ. It is their death, not the death of Jesus, which Ezekiel, in one of his chapters held in highest favour by Millenarians, tells us is to constitute the "sin-offering." The Holy Ghost, too, is equally ignored in the mode of worship which so many Millenarians are looking forward to as that which is to be universal and perpetual during the thousand The Millennial religion, instead of being a spiritual system, is to consist exclusively of a dry, dull, wearisome mode of worship. All, or nearly all, the other phases of the Millennial question I can contemplate with comparative composure of mind, however full of the fanciful element I may consider them to be: but I can neither think nor write without deeper and stronger emotions than I am able to express, on part of a system which not only virtually robs Christ of his glory-even placing Moses before Him-but, with an astonishing inconsistency, shuts Him out from that Millennial kingdom which they say is exclusively his.

CHAPTER IX.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE MILLENARIAN SYSTEM.

I SPEAK advisedly, when I say that it would be easy to fill a volume in pointing out and replying to the difficulties which are incident to the Millenarian system. But the space which I can allot to this chapter is so limited, that I can only deal with a comparative few of their number.

Some of the more candid of Millenarians with whom I have conversed on the subject, have admitted to me, in private, that the system has its difficulties; but it is worthy of observation that I cannot, at the moment, name a single Millenarian author of reputation who has publicly made this admission. is to be regretted. The admission of difficulties would not necessarily involve an admission that the system is grounded in error. Though entirely differing from Millenarians, I admit that there is much in the Scriptures which is seemingly in favour of their views. I think that, on the same principle, candour might lead them to make the concession to us anti-Millenarians, that they are conscious of certain formidable difficulties which attach to their system.

But I will not dwell further on that point. One great difficulty incident to Millenarianism is, that it is incompatible with the intercessory character of Christ. And this, I hold, would be sufficient of itself to prove fatal to it. Millenarians, I doubt not, will readily make this concession. But then they reject the conclusion, because they do not admit the premises—namely, that their system is incompatible with the intercession of Christ. Let us, then, bestow a brief consideration on the point.

With the intercession of Christ we inseparably associate the idea of his exercising his intercessory functions at the right hand of God in heaven. This great truth seems to me to pervade the whole of the epistles. Paul, speaking of Christ, says, in the thirty-fourth verse of the eighth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." the doctrine of our Lord's intercession is associated with the fact of his sitting at the right hand of God, in glory. In the fourteenth verse of the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the writer says: "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Here again our Lord is brought before us in the capacity of our Advocate at the right hand of God. In the sixth chapter and twentieth verse of the same epistle, it is said, "Whither the Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Here it is distinctly stated that Christ is to fulfil for ever in heaven the duties which devolve upon Him as our Advocate—a statement manifestly at variance with

the Millenarian scheme of his personal reign on earth.

In the first verse of the eighth chapter of the same book it is said, "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Here again we have a distinct affirmation that Christ's intercession for us is carried on in heaven. The same truth is no less plainly affirmed in the twenty-fourth verse of the ninth chapter. "Christ," it is said, "is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." In the twelfth verse of the next chapter we are told that "this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." And the Apostle John says, in the first verse of the second chapter of his first epistle, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father," that is, in heaven, "Jesus Christ the righteous."

So that nothing could be more clear than the important truth, that the functions which Christ fulfils for his people are exercised at the right hand of God in heaven. His intercessory offices are only performed there. There is not a solitary passage in the whole of the Bible which gives any countenance to the idea that Christ will ever sustain the character of our Advocate or Intercessor on earth.

The only mode of meeting this Millenarian difficulty which I have seen attempted by Millenarians of note is, that Christ could be the Intercessor of his people on earth, and that He did pray and plead for them before his incarnation, and while He was on earth. No anti-Millenarian, I venture to say, has ever written a word at variance with this. We all admit, as unreservedly as Millenarians themselves, that Christ could effectually exercise anywhere the functions with which He is invested as the Advocate of those who believe in Him. We further concede to our opponents, that Christ did plead with the Father for his people not only while on earth, but before He assumed our nature and came into our world. I will go further than this—further even than any Millenarian, so far as I am aware, ever asked anti-Millenarians to go-I admit that,

in a sense, Christ was an Advocate or Intercessor on behalf of his people from all eternity. In the councils of eternity we have our adorable Lord thus addressing God the Father, when there was no other possible way whereby sinners could be saved, but by his incarnation, his obedience, his sufferings, and his death on our behalf,—"Lo, here am I, send me."

But this is all irrelevant to the point at issue. It is wholly beside the question. When we speak of Christ having entered heaven for his people, and of his being set down at the right hand of God, "where He ever liveth to make intercession for us," we speak of Him solely in his mediatorial character. That is the light in which He is viewed in those portions of Scripture to which I have referred. Now in that light He could not be regarded either before the foundation of the world or during his sojourn in it, whether previous or subsequent to his death. It was only, as has been before shown, after his resurrection from the grave, and ascension into heaven, that He assumed, or was invested with, mediatorial functions. It was not until He sat down on

the right hand of God in glory that He became an Intercessor and Advocate, in the proper acceptation of the terms. Nor is there any trace of an intimation in any part of the Scriptures that it was ever meant, either by God the Father or by Christ Himself, that He should exercise the intercessory functions with which He is invested, in any other locality than where He now is, -in that heaven which for us He has entered. "Where He ever liveth to make intercession for us" is, though a short text, entirely conclusive on the point.

There is something inexpressibly sweet to every believer in Christ in the thought that our Lord is at the right hand of the Father in glory, "where He ever liveth,"-where, in other words, He will remain so long as the world lasts, to make intercession for his disciples on earth. It might, as every Christian knows, have been so arranged between the Father and the Son, as that the intercession of the latter might be carried on in our world. No one doubts that, just as no one doubts that if such an arrangement had been entered into between God and Christ, the intercessory offices of the latter would have been all-prevailing on earth as they are in heaven; but it was otherwise determined by God. In the economy of redemption it was ordained that the advocacy of Christ on behalf of his people should be carried on in heaven alone at the right hand of God, which is incompatible with the intercession of our Lord in the Millennial state, when He is alleged to be an inhabitant of this earth. Believers in Christ rejoice in the fact that it is in heaven that our Lord carries on his intercessory work; for there He is, speaking of Him in his mediatorial character, ever in close proximity to his Father, who heareth Him alway. They rejoice too that He will not for one moment absent Himself from his mediatorial post in his Father's presence and at his Father's right hand.

Millenarians, though much in the habit of depreciating our most eminent commentators, when opposed to Millenarianism, and of even speaking disrespectfully of some of our most learned and most pious divines, never lose an opportunity of making citations from the works of both these classes of anti-Millenarians when anything is to be found in their pages which is deemed adapted to sanction Millenarian views. In reference to the point under consideration-namely, the locality of our Lord's intercession, Dr. Owen is made to do duty. The following extract is given from his "Christologia."—" Upon supposition," says that learned and profound theologian. "of the obedience of Christ in this life, and the atonement made by his blood for sin, with his exaltation thereon, there is nothing in any essential property of the nature of God, nothing in the eternal unchangeable law of obedience to hinder, but that God might work all those things in us unto his own honour and glory, in the eternal salvation of the Church and the destruction of all its enemies without a continuance of the administration of the offices of Christ in heaven, and all that sacred solemnity of worship wherewith it is accompanied."

The italics in this citation from Dr. Owen are neither his nor mine; they are the property of the Millenarian author from whose work I have transferred the passage to my pages. But even with the aid of the italics, into which a particular sentence has been put by a Millenarian hand, the quotation from Dr. Owenjustly, I think, so far at least as profundity is concerned, called the prince of divines, -cannot be made to prove the Millenarian notion that it is a matter of indifference whether the intercession of Christ be carried on on earth or in heaven, or, indeed, in what part of God's illimitable empire our Lord fulfils his functions as our Intercessor or Advocate. All that Dr. Owen here expresses is simply this, that the atonement of Christ having satisfied all the claims of law and equity, God might, had He so pleased, have accomplished the salvation of his Church without the administration of the offices of Christ at all. But then God was not so pleased. It was his pleasure that Christ should continue till the end of the world to fulfil his mediatorial functions in heaven; and the simple fact that God did so order it that our Lord should carry on his intercessory work for us in heaven, is decisive of the question. That Dr. Owen could not have had in his mind. in the extract from his work which I have made, the possible intercession of Christ on earth on

behalf of his people, is proved by the fact that he did not believe in the personal reign of Christ in our world.

In connection with the intercessory work of the Lord Jesus, there is yet another difficulty attaching to the theory of his personal reign. Believers in Christ pray to Him in life and in death. The last words of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, were, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Myriads of dying saints since his day have addressed their last prayer to Christ, just as, following the example and injunctions of the apostles, they had prayed to Him all their lives ever since their conversion. Now how will believers in Jesus act in relation to praying to Him in the Millennial dispensation? They cannot address their prayers to Him as his disciples now do, as seated at the right hand of God in heaven. Will they then pray to Him as seated on David's throne in Jerusalem? The Scriptures say nothing, nor even hint anything that would warrant our supposing that prayer will then be offered to Christ as it is now. We can easily conceive that those who shall see Him personally,

because locally near Him, will worship and adore Him. But only a very few, compared with the population of the world, can be thus privileged. It is impossible, speaking in accordance with the ordinary meaning of language, as representing ideas as to persons and space, that more than two or three millions, if so many, will habitually see the Lord in person. And these would be but few indeed compared with the population of the world, which even now amounts to a thousand millions of souls, and which, in all probability, will be much larger then. Hundreds of thousands of millions of our race therefore, not seeing the Saviour by the eye of sense, will, it may safely be inferred, feel a difficulty, if not an impossibility, in praying to Him as seated on David's throne in Jerusalem; and as He is no longer to be discerned by the eye of faith in heaven, I cannot see how any believer can pray to Him there. Need I name the consequence? I can see no other result than that of prayers ceasing altogether to be offered to Christ, except it may be by the very few persons comparatively who shall be privileged to see and approach Him personally in Jerusalem

Millenarians dwell so much on the Millennial state as being a kingdom, and on Christ as the King, that there seems no small incongruity in their recognizing the intercessory work of our Lord, even in a modified measure. But this is true to some extent of some of their number. Others run to the other extreme, and boldly maintain that in the Millennial period of the earth the intercession of Christ will be carried on with an immeasurably greater amount of success than has crowned his advocacy in heaven. The Rev. Mr. Baxter thus writes on this point:-"It is," he says, "altogether unscriptural to suppose that Christ's mediatorial office ends when He leaves the Father's right hand to come to the earth, for, in fact, that is the very time when it begins to be most fully exercised. There will be innumerably more sinners saved by his intercession and advocacy during the thousand years that succeed his descent from Jehovah's right hand to the earth, than were ever saved during his previous occupation of that position:

and just as the elect were converted during the four thousand years and upwards before the Lord Jesus sat down at God's right hand, so can they be converted during the Millennial thousand years after He has relinquished that seat, and come to the earth to sit upon the throne of David, and to establish the fifth universal monarchy."

These are startling statements. Mr. Baxter wisely abstains from professing to cite scriptural authorities in their favour, because he knows there are none to be found.

Another difficulty adhering to the Millenarian scheme, which I regard as not only great, but insurmountable, is the dissimilarity of nature which will exist throughout the Millennium between the glorified saints and the members of Christ's earthly kingdom during the entire thousand years. This dissimilarity between the glorified saints having glorified bodies and entirely sinless natures, and the saints on earth having corrupt bodies and possessing sinful natures in a spiritual sense, will, it seems to me morally certain, prevent their perfect fraternization, or con-

tinuous and intimate intercourse with each other. The matter requires no lengthened argument. It does not indeed admit of anv.

The state of the two classes will be so manifestly different that any such amalgamation or mixture is entirely out of the question. Were they, indeed, to be brought into intimate intercourse with each other, the dissimilarity in the natures and circumstances of the two classes, would be subversive of the happi ness of both. Millenarians feel themselves reduced to great straits when asked for the grounds on which they rest their belief that the glorified saints with their Lord in heaven, and those the subjects of sin on earth will intermingle, but they have none to give. Scripture entirely fails them. It gives not even the slightest countenance to the notion. The only thing, therefore, that remains for them is to have recourse to the fact that angels are represented in Scripture as having on various well authenticated occasions had intercourse with mortal men, and that there is such a thing as the ministry of angels. Dr. Owen's services are here again called in, and his

invaluable work on the Epistle to the Hebrews is referred to as showing that he attached importance to angelic ministrations. All this is a work of supererogation. Anti-Millenarians never denied, or doubted the fact that angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister to them who shall be heirs of salvation. But when this admission is made by us, of what avail is it to Millenarians in the present case? Of none at all. Angels and men have no intercourse together, in the literal acceptation of the word, nor did they ever have. In a few recorded instances angels have been seen, and their voice has been heard; but their meetings, if such they might be called, with men, have been mostly for a few moments only. The fact, therefore, of the ministration of angels in relation to men, does not even bear the appearance of an argument in favour of the Millenarian theory that glorified saints, and mortal men possessing corrupt bodies, will, in the Millennial state, cordially mingle together.

The two difficulties to which I have thus adverted, incident to the Millenarian system,

are the only ones which Millenarians admit to be of any importance, and these, they persuade themselves, they get rid of in the way I have mentioned. But we beg Millenarians to remember that we anti-Millenarians do not concede to them either that the two difficulties in question are the only ones worthy of consideration which attach to their scheme, or that they have yet succeeded in removing them. It is mere assumption when they say they have in the case of either difficulty. But besides these two difficulties, there are others both numerous and great.

There is one very great difficulty in connection with the theory of Christ's personal reign on earth. All Millenarians admit that during the Millennium there will be such an outpouring of the Spirit as the world has never before witnessed. Now the descent of the Holy Ghost, and his presence with believers, was to be contingent on our Lord's ascension into heaven, and his remaining there. Speaking to his disciples, our Lord said, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to

you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you." No one can read these words of Christ without coming to the conclusion, that it is part of the arrangement, on the part of the Trinity, in relation to the economy of man's redemption, that after the death of Christ He and the Comforter should not be together in the same sense in the Church. And if our Lord distinctly stated that in the event of his remaining on earth, instead of ascending into heaven, the Comforter could not come, it is evident that in the event of his returning to remain personally on earth, the Holy Spirit must withdraw from it. Though as regards their Godhead, Jesus and the Holy Ghost, are omnipresent throughout the illimitable universe, yet in the economy of redemption it has been so arranged that both should not be on our earth at once. This was clearly intimated by Christ Himself before his ascension; and what was, according to his words, true at the period in question, we are justified, in the absence of any evidence to the contrary, in assuming He meant to continue the order of things until the end of the

world. But apart from the teachings of Scripture on the subject, one cannot see a reason in the fitness of things, as we understand them, that Christ should be partially present together with the Holy Spirit. Our Lord Himself said when on earth, that it would be the special province of the Spirit to take the things which are Christ's and show them to his disciples, and to bring all things to their remembrance, whatsoever He had said unto them. Now this part of the work of the Spirit would become, speaking after the manner of men, one of supererogation, if Christ Himself were to be personally present during the thousand years. He Himself would be the teacher, not the Holy Ghost. The teaching of the Holy Spirit would not, in the supposed case, be at all necessary; for what mode of teaching could be better, what so good, as being directly taught from the lips of the Lord Himself? In one word, there would be-speaking with the most profound reverence—a conflict, between the respective functions of Christ and the Holy Spirit, were the former personally present on the earth

while the latter was carrying on the work which Christ gave Him to do, when He said, "If I depart," or when I depart, "I will send Him," that is, the Holy Ghost, "unto you."

There is another consideration which presses with great force on my mind in connection with the personal reign of Christ, and which I regard as constituting powerful presumptive evidence against it. I refer to the bearing of that hypothesis on God Himself, on heaven, and on believers dying in the Millennial state. Nearly all-certainly the great majority of Millenarians-believe that all the holy angels, as well as the spirits of the just made perfect, will come with Christ, constituting a radiant retinue, when He returns to our world. Need I point out what is the inevitable conclusion from that fact? Who can fail to perceive that the necessary consequence will be, that God alone will remain in heaven for a thousand years; for we do not anywhere read that any others of the glorious company of angels, or the noble army of saints, constituting the Church triumphant, will return to heaven while Christ remains on earth. As in the

assumed case—and I only deal with it as an assumption-God will be left alone in heaven, it will consequently become one vast place of desolation. There will be no eye to behold the transcendent celestial glory of the Father, nor any tongue to sing his high praises. God will not be even a sharer in the Millennial glory of Christ. All the Hosannahs with which earth will resound during its Millennial era, will be offered to Christ alone. These are considerations which I would commend to the most serious attention of Millenarians. Are any such prepared to acquiesce in the alternative which, in relation to the points in question, their system imposes upon them? Are there any among the great and growing body who have embraced the Millennial theory that will, after due deliberation, accept the alternative of heaven being a place of utter desolation, so far as angels and men are concerned, for the period of a thousand years?

Another difficulty is to be found in the fact, to which I formerly alluded by way of parenthesis. I mean that there must be, on the personal reign hypothesis, a separation between God the Father, and Christ the Son, for a thousand years. Essentially, as regards the divinity of each, there never, of course, can be, as there never has been, any separation between the two first persons in the Trinity; but throughout the whole of the New Testament, they are, with the Holy Spirit, brought before us in their respective characters in connection with the economy of redemption. In this sense, therefore, there must of necessity be a separation between the Father and the Son during the whole of the thousand years that the latter is to reign mediatorially on the earth. And as all the angels and glorified saints are to come with our Lord when He returns, and are to be with Him in the air, or on the earth, according to which of the two hypothesis particular Millenarians entertain, God the Father, will, as parenthetically observed before, remain during the entire Millennium alone in heaven. It will, notwithstanding all the ineffable glory of the place, be one vast desolation, with the single exception of God's own presence. Not only is the idea at variance with the whole tenor of Scripture, but one's feelings are pained at the thought of such a state of things.

In some measure connected with this, there is another difficulty—namely, the state of those saints who shall die during the Millennium. We have seen that the people of God will suffer, sicken, and die then as now. Nothing, therefore, could be more natural than a wish to know what will become of them in the interval between the time of their death and the day of judgment. I should like much to see a Millenarian undertake to answer that question. I know of no such attempt having been made. I have sought to make myself thoroughly acquainted with Millenarian literature, but this is a difficulty incident to the system which I do not remember to have seen attempted to be dealt with. In the existing dispensation it is the hope of all believers in Christ during life, and their chief source of solace and support in the immediate prospect of death, that the moment their souls quit their bodies, the former will be with

Christ in heaven. "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," were the last words which the martyr Stephen uttered. "I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better," was the language of Paul in the contemplation of his closing scene. "Absent from the body and present with the Lord," was a synonymous expression of the same apostle, which filled his soul to overflowing with consolation and joy as he looked forward to his dying hour. And such has been the blessed experience, such the holy hope, such the spring of their highest comfort, to all succeeding believers in Christ as they contemplated the day when the earthly house of their tabernacle should be dissolved. But with the advent of our Lord to reign personally on earth, this source of holy hope will be swept away for the thousand years during which He is to remain upon it.

If the spirits of the saints whose bodies die during the Millennium wing their flight to heaven at all, they will have no Saviour to meet and welcome them as they pass the portals of glory. No "Well done, good and

faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," will greet their ears or gladden their The question here presents itself, Will heaven be to such a heaven at all? A heaven without Christ! The thing is an impossibility. Christ is heaven. But the heaven which Millenarians promise us for a thousand years is not only to be without Christ, but without holy angels or kindred spirits to unite with them in singing the high praises of God. The inevitable consequence of this state of things which is necessary according to the Millenarian system, will be that during the personal reign of Christ on earth, death must be an object of dread to believers; and if so, it follows that through their fear of death they will be subject to bondage. Can a scheme which involves these alternatives be a scriptural scheme? Unhesitatingly and most emphatically we say it cannot.

Another difficulty attaching to the Millenarian system arises from its connection with the final judgment. Our Lord explicitly stated to his disciples that even He Himself did not, speaking as man, know when that solemn

day would dawn on the world. Neither, He added, was it known to the angels, nor, indeed, to any one but to his Father in heaven. But Millenarianism speaks another language. It says, in effect, that the day of judgment may be known, and will be known at the commencement of the Millennium. Millenarians, with a very few isolated exceptions, speak in the most positive terms of the general judgment taking place immediately after the close of the Millennium. It is plain, therefore, that if those on the earth at the Millennial advent of our Lord can identify the day on which his Millennial reign will commence, they can fix with absolute certainty on the very day in which the general judgment will take place. I know of no Millenarians of note-with the exception of the Rev. Isaac Lablagh, of the United States, author of the "Great Events that are Coming upon the Earth," and the Rev. John Baillie, author of the "Memoirs of the Rev. W. H. Hewitson," "Rivers in the Desert," etc.—who entertain the opinion that there will be an interval of longer or shorter duration between the close of the Millennium

and the resurrection of the wicked, and consequently between the termination of the thousand years' personal reign of Christ and the final judgment of all mankind. These Millenarian authors believe that the resurrection of the wicked will not take place until after the end of "the little season," which "little season," as I have shown, may embrace a period of some thousands of years. With these exceptions, so far as I am aware, all Millenarians are agreed in the conviction that the resurrection of the wicked and the consequent general judgment will take place at once on the close of the Millennium. And if they are right in this belief, it follows as an inevitable result that all who shall live during the Millennial state of the earth will know the day of the general judgment. Are Millenarians, then, let me ask, prepared for this consequence of their creed? Are they prepared to say that our Lord was in error when He said that neither angels nor men, nor any but his Father in heaven, knew the day of judgment? There is no escape for them from this difficulty of their system. Either Millenarianism has no foundation in

Scripture, or Christ was mistaken when He said that the day of judgment was unknown to any but his Father in heaven. If Millenarianism be true, our Lord's exhortation to his disciples to watch, on the ground that no one knew the day or the hour of the general judgment, will cease to be appropriate after the Millennium begins. As our Lord's immediate disciples, if they had been Millenarians, might have known that it could not take place for at least a thousand years, so those who live in the Millennial times will have a certain knowledge, if they are prepared to follow out their Millenarian creed to its legitimate results, of the time, within a few days at least, when Christ shall come to the general judgment.

One great difficulty attaching to Millenarianism is involved in the question, "What is to become of the saints who shall die during the Millennial dispensation?" Scripture is silent on the subject. Even Millenarians themselves admit this. They do not cite a single portion of the Word of God whereby they may be able to meet this difficulty. They do not go further, even according to their own

admission, than forming a conjecture on the And this conjecture is confessedly point. vague. They suppose that those who die in Christ during the Millennium will somehow or other be raised from their graves to be made inheritors of the happiness which is to follow "The End of all Things"; while with regard to those who are alive at the close of the Millennial dispensation, they also suppose that these will undergo, in some way or other, a transformation which will meeten them for the state of saintly existence, which will follow the Millennial reign of our Lord. Millenarians on this one point are entitled to the praise of candour. They do not dogmatize on the subject. They give their opinions, where they have any-which with regard to many of their number, is not the case—as their own, and not as those which are sanctioned by express statements in the Word of God. So far, well; but is it right, is it logical, that they should so tenaciously cling to a system which involves so great a difficulty as the one under consideration, and which they are constrained to confess admits of no satisfactory explanation?

The Millenarian scheme makes no provision for the state of things, in this respect, which will present itself at the end of the thousand years. The Scriptures are silent as to what will become of the saints who have died during the Millennium. They are no less so in relation to those who shall be alive when the Millennium era comes to a close. We hear nothing in the Bible of the resurrection of the former class. The Scriptures say nothing relative to a transformation and translation of the latter. If the first class-namely, the dead-were to be raised, then there would be two resurrections of the righteous,—a second resurrection of the just. If the second classnamely, those alive at the end of the Millennium-were to be transformed and translated, then there would be a second transformation and translation of saints. Yet the Scriptures utter not a word with regard to either. What, then, is to become of the saints who die during the Millennium? What is to become of the believers who shall be found alive when the last moment shall have come of the Millennial period of the earth's history? I leave

these questions to Millenarians to answer. It is for them to do so. If they cannot give us a satisfactory answer, the fact must be regarded as fatal to their system.

Not less formidable—in some respects, perhaps even more so-is the difficulty which arises in connection with our Lord Himself, when the end of the Millennial era shall have come. The last representation which we have in Scripture leaves Christ reigning with his saints. After that, the Word of God is silent on the subject. But we know that contemporaneously with the close of the Millennium there will be the loosing of Satan from his prison. and the astounding success which shall attend the mission on which he will forthwith set out to deceive the nations. That mission is to embrace "the four quarters of the earth," and the extent of his success is clearly indicated by the fact that when the battle of Gog and Magog takes place, the number of Satan's soldiers fighting against the saints of God in Jerusalem, will be as the sand of the sea. The portion of Scripture in which this representation is given does not say one word relative to our Lord, while

the marshalling of Satan's legions and his leading them in the great battle take place. Does it not seem strange that He who had reigned with them a thousand years in Jerusalem, should not be mentioned as present with them at this tremendous crisis? But passing from that point, the question presents itself, What becomes of the Lord from the time at which the Millennium closes until the day of the general judgment? Scripture says nothing of Him in that interval, which may be, as we have shown in a previous part of this chapter, one of thousands of years' duration,and which in the nature of things must be one of some duration, for we are not to suppose that the process of deceiving the nations by Satan is to be one which will be instantaneously performed. But even if it were to be instantaneous, so far as those nations listening to the seductive voice of Satan are concerned, it would require a certain length of time to bring them from the four quarters of the earth to Jerusalem, and to train and otherwise prepare them for the great impending battle there.

The question then recurs, Where is Christ all this time? We cannot suppose that He could be all the while on the earth, and Scripture be silent as to the fact. In the battle of Armageddon, which Millenarians tell us is to immediately precede the ushering in of the Millennial era, our Lord is the most prominent figure-indeed the only prominent figure. He comes to the rescue of his sorely-beleaguered saints in the Holy City, and triumphantly vanquishes Satan and all the countless infidel hosts which fought under his banner on that great occasion. This fact makes all the more marvellous the silence of Scripture as to where He is, or how engaged, on the still greater occasion when the battle of Gog and Magog takes place. But not only is it surprising that, viewing the seventeenth chapter of Revelation, in which the references are made to this battle, in the literality which Millenarians claim for it, nothing should be said of Christ,it is no less so that no mention is made of his name until we read of Him as seated on the great white throne, from off which He is to judge the whole world. If Christ remains on

the earth during the period, be it long or short, which is to intervene between the close of the Millennium and the general judgment, then it is clear that He cannot, strictly speaking, come from heaven, as we are told He will, to judgment. If He is to return to heaven at the end of the thousand years, and thence to come to judge the world at the last day, then it is demonstrable that there will be three personal "comings" of Christ-the first, at his incarnation; the second, at his coming to establish his Millennial kingdom; and the third, to finally judge all mankind. If this be so, then it is equally evident that the Scripture which speaks of his "coming a second time without sin unto salvation," must be at variance with the fact. The passage should be amended by the substitution of the word "third" for "second,"-that is, on the assumption that the Millenarian notions on the point are correct.

To the very formidable, indeed, to my mind insurmountable, difficulty as regards Millenarianism, which I have thus pointed out, I would, with all kindness and all courtesy, en-

treat the attention of all who believe in the personal reign of Christ. We hear nothing of our Lord, I repeat, between the close of the Millennium and the final judgment at the last day of the world's existence. What, thenlet me put the question again-comes of Him during the interval, be it brief, or be it prolonged? I have put the question privately to some of the most eminent Millenarians of the present day, and no one, not in a single instance, has returned a satisfactory answer. Some of them, indeed—and these the ablest among them-have candidly confessed that they could not answer the question, and have no less frankly admitted that it constitutes a difficulty of no common magnitude, as regards the Millenarian system.

When conversing with Millenarians on this aspect of the question, and pointing out to them this formidable objection to their scheme, their only mode of meeting my arguments has been to dwell on the brevity of this period of the triumph of Satan and his hosts. But the alleged brevity of the triumph of the "Wicked One" is merely assumed. There is

not a sentence in Scripture which gives the slightest countenance to it. I know the Millenarian answer which will be given to my argument. It will be the statement in the seventh verse of the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, that it is only for a little season that Satan is to be loosed. But that little season, judging from analogical scriptural expressions, may mean a very prolonged period, even thousands of years. The prophet Haggai, in the sixth and seventh verses of the second chapter of his book, makes God thus express Himself: "Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts." Now, this portion of Scripture, which every Millenarian, without one single exception, so far as I know, maintains, refers exclusively to the Millennium,—was written more than five hundred years before Christ, and yet the shaking of the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land, and the nations, here predicted,

has not yet taken place, although an interval has already elapsed of nearly two thousand five hundred years since the prophecy was first written by the pen of Haggai. In the thirty-seventh verse of the tenth chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, referring to the second advent of Christ, it is said, "For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." This promise of the coming of our Lord, though uttered nearly two thousand years ago, has not yet been fulfilled. Now, the phrase, "little while," is exactly equivalent to the expression, "a little season." The Apostle John, too, in his book of Revelation, twice uses the word shortly, in relation to things which were to come to pass, and which we know have not yet come to pass, though an interval of nearly two thousand years has elapsed since the word "shortly" was thus employed by the exile of Patmos. In the seventh verse of the last chapter of the same book, Christ Himself says to his people, in relation to his coming again personally to the world to receive them to Himself, "Behold, I come quickly." In the twentieth

verse, and the last but one in the inspired volume, Jesus repeats the assurance of his coming again in almost the same words. "Surely," He says, "I come quickly." Yet the promise still remains unfulfilled. This expression, "I come quickly," is synonymous, like that of "a little while," with the phrase, "a little season"; and as both phrases are synonymous with the expression, "a little season," during which Satan is to be let loose, and to do battle with Christ and his saints-no Millenarian, it is evident, is justified in assuming that the interval between the close of the Millennium, and of our Lord's putting all his enemies under his feet, will be, as they take for granted, only the matter of a few days. Is not the inference from all this inevitable? Can those who inhabit the earth in bodies like ours, or can even the glorified saints be so transcendently blessed as Millenarians tell us they will be, during the Millennium, when they know that at the close of the Millennial period, Satan and his legions may be triumphant in the world for thousands of years? I leave the question for the serious

consideration of those who firmly believe in the thousand years' personal reign on the earth.

But even were there no other difficulty attaching to the Millennial theory, I should have supposed that the very thought of its so soon coming to an end would suffice to divest it of the glory and the bliss with which it is clothed, in the minds of those who believe in it. How very brief is the time during which it is to last! Only a thousand years! How soon that period will pass away! It is but as a day. Like man's life at present, it will be but as a vapour. As compared with the eternity which is to follow, it will be less than a moment. When contrasted with a more prolonged period than arithmetic can calculate, it will be but the twinkling of an eye. Surely that consideration must have the effect of depriving those who shall be the subjects of Christ's Millennial kingdom, of much of the enjoyment which, under other circumstances, it might have ministered to such as shall be the inhabitants of the world during his personal reign.

And as every succeeding season of the

Millennial period comes and goes, there must be a correspondingly great drawback to the happiness of earth's inhabitants; for it is, and always has been, the experience of mankind that the sooner the source of pleasure will be over, the smaller will that pleasure prove. Every succeeding generation of the inhabitants of the Millennial world will derive a diminished amount of enjoyment from that experienced by the generation that preceded.

I cannot and never could conceive by what mental process those who dwell, in such ecstatic terms on the glory and bliss of the Millennial state, could work themselves up to such transcendent rapture, as they tell us they experience, when looking forward to the advent of our Lord to establish his Millennial kingdom in the world. If they know—and their system binds them down to the belief—that it cannot, under any circumstances, exceed by one day the literal thousand years, I cannot comprehend how they can experience such inconceivable happiness from the contemplation of our Lord's personal return to set up his Millennial kingdom. It does seem

to me—and I earnestly trust I speak, while I so express myself, with the deepest reverence—it does seem to be unworthy of those exalted ideas of our glorious Lord which all believers would ever wish to cherish of Him, that He should leave his throne in the highest heavens to come to our world for so brief a period as a thousand years, even were the Millennial state to be entirely exempt from sin, and suffering, and sorrow,—which we know it will not be.

Nor do these observations apply only to those believers in Christ who shall be on the earth in its Millennial epoch. They apply no less to the glorified saints reigning with Christ in the air. Though the latter may not be directly affected by what is to take place at the end of the thousand years, because being with Christ, and consequently under his almighty protection, yet it cannot be otherwise than that,—knowing what is coming on the earth at the expiration of the Millennial period—their cup of happiness will have mingled in it ingredients of sorrow. Their intense, their absorbing love for their Lord must lead them

deeply to lament the triumph which Satan is about to achieve, in a sense, over Christ Jesus and his saints on earth. Eventually, it is true, Christ will signally and for ever come off victorious over Satan and his malevolent hosts. He will, in the end, bruise Satan under his feet. But still there will be the triumph of Satan, and his countless legions, for a season, and that very fact would, I hold, be sufficient to diminish the happiness of the glorified saints with Christ in the air, as well as that of his saints on earth, provided I believed in a Millennial state of the world under the personal sovereignty of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

I will only add that if the above "Difficulties of Millenarianism" are taken one by one, and receive that careful and prayerful consideration from my Millenarian readers, to which the importance of the subject entitles them, I feel assured that their aggregate weight will lead many to abjure Millenarianism as being a system which is unsanctioned alike by revelation and reason, while others undecided on the subject, will be prevented from becoming lost in the labyrinth of Millenarianism.

CHAPTER X.

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION AMONG MILLE-NARIANS.

I now bespeak the special attention of my readers to the proofs which I am about to furnish of the extraordinary diversities of sentiment which exist among Millenarians in relation to some of the principal features of their system. If I were not in a position to name the leading men among the parties who thus differ so greatly, and refer to those of their works on which I ground my statements, I am sure my statements and facts would not be credited.

First of all, in relation to the restoration of the Jews,—an event which all Millenarians are agreed in regarding as an indispensable preliminary to the introduction of the Millenarian era, there are various opinions among them. With regard to the ten tribes, though supposed by the great bulk of Millenarians to be lost, there are diversities of opinion among them. The Rev. John Wilson has devoted a long lifetime to prove that we, the people of Great Britain, are the ten lost tribes. To make out this proposition seems, indeed, to have been his mission for more than thirty years. He has written with this view a very able work, full of research, under the title of "Our Israelitish Origin,"—a copy of which he lately presented to me. The late Rev. William Trotter, author of "Plain Papers," and various other Millenarian publications, maintained that the ten tribes were restored long ago. Mr. Benjamin Wills Newton contends that they were never lost.

Some Millenarians, among whom I may mention the name of the Rev. William Burgh, believe there is to be another dispersion and captivity of the Jews before their restoration. The opinion of Mr. Molyneux is that there are to be two restorations of the Jews. To the advocacy of this view he devotes a considerable portion of his work, "Israel's

Future." But Millenarians generally content themselves with the conviction, that the Jews will be restored as a people in unbelief before the personal return of the Lord to our earth. It is believed by the Millenarians to whom I allude that in their own land the Jews will be nationally converted on Christ's visible re-appearance on Mount Olivet, for the purpose of erecting his throne in Jerusalem, and establishing his Millennial kingdom over all the earth. But an opinion has been steadily gaining ground among Millenarians of late, that before this the prophecy relative to Daniel's seventy weeks of years will be literally fulfilled. A covenant is to be made with the Jews by Antichrist, who is to be a person and a monarch. He will engage not only to restore them to their own land, but to protect them there for a period of seven years. But in the middle of the seven years—that is, in three years and a half, after making this covenant—this personal Antichrist is to break the covenant, and is to go up to Jerusalem with a mighty army, gathered from all nations, to exterminate the Jews. This is a theory which Mr. M. Baxter

has advocated at much greater length than any other Millenarian author with whom I am acquainted. In his "Coming Battle," his "Louis Napoleon, the Destined Monarch of the World," and in his new edition, published only a few weeks ago, of his "Coming Wonders," he elaborately argues in support of this interpretation of the seventy weeks of Daniel. He quotes several of the early Fathers as having entertained the same opinion, though not applying their principles to any future person that might arise. Among these were Cyprian, Irenæus, Hippolytus, and Victorinus. Of modern Millenarian divines who take the same view of the notable prophecy in question, so far as relates to the covenant with the Jews, Mr. Baxter enumerates the names of Canon H. Browne, and the Revs. Dr. De Burgh, Edward Bickersteth, T. Birks, C. J. Goodhart, Capel Molyneux, C. Maitland, A. Fausset, J. Baillie, J. G. Gregory, F. Fysh, W. Marrable, James Kelly, Dr. J. Seiss, E. E. Reinke, E. Guers, H. G. Guinness, R. A. Purdon, A. A. Rees, J. Darby, W. Kelly, Sir Edward Denny, Judge T. Strange, Dominick McCausland, Dr. Tregelles, B. W. Newton, Major Phillips, etc.

Mr. Baxter, with the view of showing the rapid progress which this theory is making, states that four or five years ago the number of persons supporting it was under sixty, whereas it is upwards of eighty now. At the same time, it is to be remembered that though the opinion in question is making progress, the number of eighty, of which it can now boast, is very small indeed, when we know it is a fact that Millenarian divines can be numbered by thousands. Besides, as I shall show hereafter, all the divines whose names Mr. Baxter here mentions, do not share in others of his views in connection with the interpretation of Daniel's prophecy of the seventy weeks of years.

With regard again to Antichrist, with whom the Millenarian question is mixed up, there exists a similar diversity of sentiment among believers in the personal reign of Christ. The Rev. R. Govett, to whose voluminous and able Millenarian writings I have repeatedly borne my testimony, and who has

done me the honour to reply, in successive numbers of the "Rainbow," to my first series, at sufficient length to make a goodly volume—Mr. Govett's notion regarding Antichrist is, that he will be Nero raised from the dead, three years and a half before the personal advent of Christ, and that he will head the enemies of our Lord and his saints at the great battle of Armageddon.

But Mr. Govett is not the only Millenarian who believes in a resurrection of a personal Antichrist. The Rev. Thomas Evill, a Millenarian of ability, published a work, entitled "The Retrospect," in the year 1847, with the view of proving, as he believed he could do, that Napoleon the First was to rise again from the tomb, and appear before the world as Antichrist. Another German Millenarian, Dr. Zimpel, with whom I have had some private conversation, has not only publicly expressed his belief that the great Napoleon will rise from his grave, as Antichrist, in 1870, but has a frontispiece to his book illustrative of the assumed resurrection. The Rev. Mr. Rees, of Sunderland, an excellent as well as

able man, formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, but now a Congregational preacher of the gospel, published a sermon in 1852, on the death of the Duke of Wellington, in which he maintained that the spirit of the first Napoleon would be infused into some other person, bearing a Napoleonic name, destined to be Antichrist. This opinion looks very like the Pythagorean belief in the transmigration of souls.

But until very recently the almost universal opinion, since the time of the Reformation, has been that the Papacy is Antichrist, personified in the Pope of Rome. Of late years, however, the conviction has made rapid progress in Millenarian circles, that Antichrist will be a king holding infidel opinions, while assuming, in a sense, divine attributes, possessing the power of working miracles, and receiving an idolatrous worship from the nations of the earth, or at least from many of the inhabitants of all countries.

It is right here to state, that though until lately the idea of a personal Antichrist was entertained but by few, whether Millenarian

or otherwise, the notion is not, properly speaking, new. It is but a revival. It was universal among the Fathers in the first three centuries; and not only so, but Antichrist was then hourly expected to appear. In the middle of the second century, Justin Martyr thus writes of Antichrist:-"He who is about to speak blasphemous and audacious things against the Most High, being already at the doors, whose continuance Daniel signifies as about to be for a time, times, and half a time." All the Millenarian Fathers, I ought to remark, believed in a three and a half years' reign of Antichrist. So do all in our day who hold the opinion of a personal Antichrist. They all concur in taking the one thousand two hundred and sixty days literally. Those who believe, on the other hand, the Papacy to be Antichrist, take each of the one thousand two hundred and sixty days to mean years, and consequently assign Antichrist a period of one thousand two hundred and sixty years in which to reign.

But while those who believe in a personal Antichrist possessing princely titles and invested with regal power, are content, with very

few exceptions, to await the developments of the future as to who the individual is to be, Mr. Baxter feels as confident that the Antichrist has already come in the person of Louis Napoleon, as if he had a special revelation from heaven on the subject. Not only in his published works, but in his public addresses, he declares his belief to be as firm in the identity of Louis Napoleon with Antichrist, as he does of his own existence. No belief, I need not say, could be stronger than that. Mr. Baxter's theory is, that next year Louis Napoleon will enter, in terms of Daniel's prophecy, into a seven years' covenant with the Jews, whose restoration to their own land he is to ensure, and whose protection for seven years in it he is to guarantee. But at the end of three years and a half, Louis Napoleon is to break the covenant thus entered into, and to go out to the Holy Land at the head of a vast army for the purpose of making war against the saints in Jerusalem. For a time he is to be successful, but just as all hope seems to be gone, and nothing but destruction awaits the saints, Christ is personally to appear on their behalf, and to destroy Louis Napoleon himself and nearly all his hosts. In less than three years after this, the Millennium is to commence,—Christ taking his seat on the throne of David in Jerusalem. It is plain, then, if Mr. Baxter's vaticinations rest on a solid foundation, that in eight years, or in the year 1875, the Millennium will have begun, and Christ and his saints be reigning in Jerusalem in all their glory.

The characteristics mentioned by Daniel as certain to be found in Antichrist, Mr. Baxter discerns with a noonday clearness alike in the person and principles of Louis Napoleon. But as yet he only regards him as an incipient Antichrist. He is not to be fully developed in that character until he becomes the universal monarch of the earth, which Mr. Baxter fully believes he will be in the course of next year, when he will come forth before the world as the Antichrist, not only exercising supreme power on the earth, but exacting religious worship as a divine being.

If I marvel much that such a hypothesis should be confidently advanced and so stren-

uously advocated by a clergyman of the Church of England, highly educated, and a man of ability, my readers may well imagine how greatly my surprise is increased when I find that about forty clergymen and dissenting ministers entertain the same views respecting the identity of Antichrist. In a note which I recently had from Mr. Baxter, he mentions the names of some of these. They arethe Rev. Mr. Nangle, editor of the "Achill Missionary Herald"; the late Mr. Beale, author of "Armageddon," in three volumes; the Rev. Mr. Shepheard, author of the "Tree of Life"; the Rev. Mr. Farrar, in the "Rainbow," and the Rev. Mr. Chester in that magazine; the Rev. G. S. Faber, in his work entitled "Revival of French Emperorship"; J. H. Frere, in his "Letters on the Prophecies"; Dr. Seiss, an eminent American divine, author of the "Last Times"; the Rev. J. G. Gregory, author of "Earth's Eventide"; the Rev. R. A. Purdon, author of the "Last Vials"; Major Phillips, in his "Interpretations"; the Rev. M. Whittemore, in his "Seventh Head"; and the Rev. S. Garratt, author of the "Midnight Cry."

There are some names in this list which I assuredly should not have expected to find there, because I had a high opinion of their judgment, though differing with them on the question of the Papal reign of Christ. They must have all been rudely shaken in their faithby the events of the last few months, as to Louis Napoleon becoming the head of a universal monarchy, and going out to Jerusalem to make war against the saints in the Holy City. From what has lately taken place in Germany, he himself must be fully conscious that his prestige as a sovereign is gone, and that instead of acquiring by force of arms a universal empire, he will have great difficulty in retaining the dominions he already possesses. Then there is the state of his health. It is well known in the best-informed circles in France, though denied, by order of the French Government, in the public journals, that Louis Napoleon's health is in a very critical state. So that the idea of his going out as Antichrist to massacre the saints at Jerusalem, or, indeed, his going there or anywhere else any distance from home, is entirely out of the question.

The Millenarians who share Mr. Baxter's belief in the identity of Antichrist are beginning to feel uncomfortable in relation to their predictions and their fulfilment. They are now studying how they shall break the fall as prophets which is impending. Mr. Baxter, in the very last two pages of his "Coming Wonders"-which pages were written since Louis Napoleon has stood before the world, outwitted by Prussia, and his prestige destroyed in consequence—refers with great manifest uneasiness to this tender point. He says, "There are persons who believe it will be some Napoleon, but who do not feel so sure that it will necessarily be Louis Napoleon." But Mr. Baxter, at any rate, cannot avail himself of this ingenious mode of seeking to escape from the prophetic predicament into which he has brought himself, in conjunction with so many others; for he not only asserts in the most positive terms all through his three Millenarian works, that the present Louis Napoleon is the destined monarch of the world, and the Antichrist, but "Louis Napoleon the Destined Monarch of the World" is the title

of his largest work; while, as if that were not enough to identify Louis Napoleon with the Antichrist of the Scriptures, Mr. Baxter gives in his new edition of his "Coming Wonders," a portrait of that sovereign as Antichrist. It occupies the most prominent part of his book. I feel bound to bear my testimony to the fidelity of this portrait so far as Louis Napoleon's countenance and external appearances generally are concerned. In whatever way, therefore, other believers in the hypothesis that Louis Napoleon is Antichrist, may try to escape from the dilemma when events shall have proved the utter groundlessness of their belief, Mr. Baxter's engraved portrait of Louis Napoleon, as well as his pen-and-ink descriptive sketches of him, will chain him down to his theory, that it is the present Louis Napoleon, and not any other Napoleon that may hereafter rise up, that is the Antichrist of the author of the "Coming Battle," "Coming Wonders," etc.

But what will probably be deemed the most strange hypothesis of all respecting the identity of Antichrist, remains to be mentioned. The Rev. James Kelly, in his Millenarian work,

the "Eternal Purpose of God," advances the idea that Antichrist is none other than Satan. Those who wish to see the mode in which Mr. Kelly endeavours to make out his case, I would refer to the fifth section of his work, which section is headed the "Destruction of Mankind at the Second Advent." There is just one text of Scripture so utterly and manifestly subversive of this theory that none other need be quoted. The passage is the well-known one in the Thessalonians-"Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." Here we are told twice over, brief as is the passage, that Antichrist is to be annihilated. He is to be consumed with the Spirit of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed with the brightness of his coming. This, as all who perish in their sins will know through all eternity to their cost, will not be the case with Satan. He will live for ever. His existencesolemn thought-will be eternal. Is it not passing strange that Mr. Kelly should actually quote this very passage, and yet fail to see

that it is subversive of his theory as to the identity of Antichrist?

Another point on which Millenarians are at variance, is as to the circumstances under which the Lord will personally come to set up his kingdom on earth. The great majority believe that He is to come attended by a glorious retinue of angels, and of glorified saints. Dr. Tregelles, Mr. B. W. Newton, Mr. Ogilvy, and a number of other Millenariansall of them belonging to the Futurist school of Millenarians-maintain that Christ will come personally to establish his kingdom on earth, attended only by angels, -not by saints as well. Mr. Newton, in his "Thoughts on the Age," says, "Christ's coming is described, not as being with his saints, for they are as yet upon the earth, when He comes from heaven into the air; but as being with angels. 'When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with Him." If there be anything more clear to my mind than another, in connection with Christ's coming personally, whether to establish a Millennial reign on earth, or to judge the world, it is that He is to

come attended by all the saints in glory. He is to come with "ten thousands of his saints," and to "come with all his saints."

As will have been inferred from a previous chapter, there is much diversity of opinion among Millenarians in relation to the question of "the secret rapture of the saints." will not go into that phase of modern Milleparianism again. I will merely observe that since I published my first volume, I find that a growing importance is attached by many Millenarians to the alleged circumstance, that all the saints on earth will not be caught up into the air at the time of the secret second coming of Christ, but only a certain number who have been looking with special earnestness for his appearance. In other words, Millenarians only of a decided kind will be the subjects of the secret rapture.

On the subject of the resurrection of the saints, there have been also great differences in the Millenarian world. With regard to the first resurrection spoken of in the twentieth chapter of the Revelation, there is an increasing difference of opinion among Mille-

narians. But the point on which there has been most diversity is as to who those saints will be who shall be "the children of the resurrection." There is a great number of our ablest Millenarians who confine it to those who have been martyrs or confessors for Christ. This was the view of several of the Millenarian Fathers of the first four centuries. It was the view also of Mede. It was a portion of Millenarianism to which he attached great importance, that it is to be a special prerogative of the martyrs who had died for Christ, that they should reign with Him. Bishop Newton expresses himself to the same effect,only he includes among those saints thus privileged to reign personally a thousand years with Christ, all who had been his confessors,all who suffered a living martyrdom for their attachment to their Lord, even supposing they did not have to seal their testimony with their blood. The Rev. Joseph Burchell, a learned and able divine, entertains the conviction which is the prevalent one among Millenarians, that all the dead saints will be included in the first resurrection, but incorporates with that conviction his belief, which, so far as I am aware, is peculiar to himself, that the Millennial earth will be possessed exclusively by the glorified saints. Those who would like to see how Mr. Burchell, who wrote on Millenarian questions nearly twenty years ago, endeavours to make out the latter strange theory, ought to consult his "Midnight Cry."

But to return to the point alluded to above, as to who among the risen saints shall reign with Christ in his Millennial kingdom, I have no hesitation in saying that were I a Millenarian, I would concur with those who believe that the martyrs and confessors only will have this high honour. John saw, in Apocalyptic vision, only the souls of such as were beheaded for Christ, reigning with Him; and another apostle says, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." This view can only be disproved by an abandonment of the literal mode of interpreting the Word of God.

But probably the strangest Millenarian modern notion in connection with the risen saints, is one which we find in the Millenarian writings of Mr. Brooks. In the fourth edition, now lying before me, of his "Essays on the Advent and Kingdom of Christ, and the Events connected Therewith," Mr. Brooks thus expresses himself. If I did not give his own words, I might be supposed to have misunderstood his meaning. He says:-"They [the risen saints] will possess the sense or faculty of taste, and probably eat and drink. To some this will appear a gross and carnal view of our angelic state; but such a prejudice arises from the carnal state of our own minds, which cannot distinguish between the holy use and the abuse of a good thing. Wide is the difference between painting heaven like a Mahomedan's paradise, as if it consisted only in meats and drinks and sensual enjoyments, and denying to the saints and angels those faculties, by which they are better enabled to appreciate the goodness and glory of the Creator!" Who could have believed it possible that language like this could proceed from any modern Christian pen,—the writer, too, having occupied a superior position as a clergyman in the Church of England.

On the subject of what is immediately to follow the coming of Christ in the Millenarian acceptation of the word, the believers in his personal reign are singularly at variance. The Millenarian Fathers did not seem to have any very clearly-defined views in relation to it. They appear to have had only some vague notion that the Millennium would be ushered in by some transformation, both socially and physically, of the earth, which would minister to the gratification of the saints. Dr. Thomas Burnet, and other Millenarians of his day, fully expected that the present earth would be burnt up, and that a glorious world would rise from its ashes. Dr. Burnet's views on this point, as developed in his "Theory of the Earth," read more like the emanations of a disordered mind than the rational utterances of a philosopher, or the chastened expressions of a man who profoundly revered revealed religion, as Dr. Burnet did. No obstacle of any kind, physical, social, or moral, to his "Theory"—a most appropriate title for such a work as his-was allowed to stand in his way, even for a moment. He swept them all

in a moment out of sight. And yet, notwithstanding the progress which the human mind has made during the intervening two hundred years since his day, I meet with many celebrated Millenarian authors, as well as Millenarians in the private walks of life, who entertain essentially the same views as he did, though expressing them with greater discretion in relation to the destruction of the world at the coming of Christ.

Probably the best known, as well as one of the ablest Millenarian writers entertaining the same views on this point, is the Rev. Walter Wood. In his "Last Things," that able writer and acute controversialist, in his chapter, entitled "The Conflagration of the Earth," lays down this proposition, and seeks at some length to establish it:—"The conflagration of the earth and heavens, mentioned by the Apostle Peter, shall take place at the second coming of Christ, and shall introduce the new heavens and the new earth, which shall be the habitation of the Millennial saints."

Dr. Cumming, in some of his later, as he had done in his previous prophetic publica-

tions, takes the same view as Mr. Wood, that the earth is to be utterly burnt up at the coming of Christ personally to establish his Millennial reign. Some of his descriptions in the works I refer to, of the universal conflagration which is to precede the Millennium, are appalling enough; but I have heard Dr. Cumming, in his pulpit ministrations, present to his entranced congregation still more terrible pictures of what he believed to be the world in flames, by which the Millennium is to be ushered in. I have felt at the time that there was a frightful fidelity in his representions—only that he applied to the commencement of the Millennial era that which is to occur at its close, when our Lord shall come to dissolve the heavens and the earth, and summon all the world's inhabitants to appear before His great white throne. It might have been supposed that common sense would have sufficed, even had Scripture been silent on the subject, to have prevented able men from falling into this error. It is clear, that if at the Millennial coming of Christ the world is to be wrapt in the flames of a universal conflagration, and all the things that are in it are to be burnt up, there will be a complete extinction of the human race. Mr. Wood is fully conscious of this exigency of his hypothesis, and accordingly acquiesces in that consequence of his creed, so far as relates to the ungodly. But, in that case, what comes of the Millenarian theory? It is an essential part of it, that all the saints who are alive at Christ's Millennial coming are to be transformed, and caught up to be in the air with their Lord. The inevitable result would be, that there would be neither righteous nor wicked persons remaining on the earth. It must, therefore, be a perfect desolation, and consequently there could be no Millennium at all. To what startling consequences are men often driven by a blind adherence to an untenable creed!

And yet Mr. Wood and Dr. Cumming are far from being peculiar in their views on this aspect of the Millenarian question. They are shared by great numbers of gifted Millenarians, though I believe they are in a considerable minority. The popular Millenarian belief is, that though the world will be regenerated, or renovated, or be made much more beautiful than it has been since the fall, it will not undergo those terrible convulsions, and that severe mode of purification by fire which Mr. Wood, Dr. Cumming, Mr. Molyneux, and others, prepare us to expect. Those Millenarians who differ from the opinion that there is to be a universal conflagration at the coming of Christ to establish his Millennial kingdom, deeply deplore that the views to which I have alluded ever should have been brought forward.

It is true that some Millenarians, determined to have a conflagration of some kind or other at the commencement of the Millennium, and yet finding a universal and entire burning up of the world exceedingly inconvenient, if not entirely subversive of their system, have expressed themselves willing to accept a partial conflagration. But that notion will not stand the test either of Scripture or reason any more than the other. Mr. Joseph Mede limited the pre-Millennial conflagration to the upper hemisphere of our earth. Mr.

Elliot is more specific than Mede. In his "Horæ Apocalypticæ" he confines the conflagration of the earth, which is to be simultaneous with the Millennial coming of Christ, to the Roman Empire. Other Millenarians believe in two conflagrations of the earth, - one at the commencement of the Millennium, and the other at the close. Mr. M. Baxter is a zealous advocate of this view-only he makes some qualifications, not very clearly comprehensible to me, as to the universality of the first of the two conflagrations. I cannot see the slightest trace in Scripture of more than one conflagration of the earth. And the fact that there will be but one universal conflagration, by the intensity of which the heavens and the earth will be burnt up, is, to my mind, a powerful presumptive argument in favour of the belief that there will be no such restoration of a Paradisiacal state of the earth as Millenarians picture to themselves, and paint in colours of such transcendent beauty. Would it not seem very unlike the works and ways of God to re-create the world in such a form as that it should justify the phrase made

use of by Dr. Isaac Watts, when he describes some moral scene of surpassing beauty, as "like a little heaven below," and afterwards, in a thousand years, again destroy it?

I have, in previous parts of this volume, made somewhat copious allusions to the diversity of opinion which exists among Millenarians in relation to the distinction which will exist between the glorified saints, including equally those raised from their graves, and those transformed and translated at the coming of Christ. But a few supplementary remarks may be desirable on that point. The notion that the Church of Christ will then be completed, and that under no circumstance can a single human being, no matter how eminent for holiness, ever be added to the Church, or to those saints who constitute the Bride of the Lamb,—is generally supposed to be of recent origin. This is not correct. Of late, it is true, the idea has become comparatively prevalent, but it can boast of at least an antiquity of two centuries. It will be found fully unfolded. with the very inferior place assigned to the saints who shall live in the Millennial days, in

the "Resurrection Revealed" of the Rev. Dr. Homes. If the idea had been brought forward before Dr. Homes's time, I have not been able to trace it. Early in the eighteenth century the notion found an able and zealous advocate in the person of the Rev. Joseph Perry, as will be seen by those who have access to his once popular, but now exceedingly scarce work, "The Glory of Christ's Visible Kingdom in this World." If the notion be scriptural, there will be no Church militant during the Millennium, -- none but the Church triumphant gloriously reigning with Christ in Jerusalem, or in the air, according to the opposite views on the point which prevail among Millenarians. We can almost feel as if we could commiserate the saints who shall be born during the Millennial thousand years. It must lessen their happiness to be conscious that they not only then, but through all eternity, will be excluded from membership in Christ's mystical body, and will have to occupy in every other respect a very much lower place than did those of the people of God who lived before the advent of our Lord. It is very inconsistent in those Millenarians

who entertain these opinions to join with others who do not share them, in singing in a prophetic sense one of our most popular hymns, which says that—

"The saints in heaven and saints on earth But one communion make."

I hold the notion to be most unscriptural; and my opinion, I am glad to say, is shared by a majority of the ablest of our Millenarians. Dr. M'Neile has written strongly in opposition to this view in his "Lectures on the Prophecies Relative to the Jewish Nation."

And here, as having some connection with the subject, I may advert for a moment to another notion, which has of late years made considerable progress, and is still, so far as I can learn, making way among the Millenarian body. I allude to the theory that inasmuch as no one living in the Millennial dispensation can ever become part of the Church of Christ or of the Lamb's wife, the Church being completed at the time of his second coming,—so none of the Old Testament saints can ever belong to the Church of Christ, because that Church only dates its existence from the

day of Pentecost. The Old Testament saints, this class of Millenarians say, will be saved just as will be the saints who shall be born in the Millennial dispensation, but like the latter-Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Noah, Lot, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the prophets -will severally have a much lower place appointed to them in heaven, than will be allotted to the saints who have lived in the interval between the ascension of Christ and his coming to establish his Millennial reign on earth. My space forbids the transfer to my pages of extracts from those Millenarian authors who advocate this notion. Suffice it to say, that many of our most eminent Millenarian writers are as zealous in its maintenance as they are in contending for any other part of the Millennial scheme. Among those who have opposed this notion, none have done so more thoroughly than the late Duke of Manchester. In his work, "The Finished Mystery," he has expressed his views on the point with an ability which fully justifies the high eulogium which Dr. David Brown pronounces upon him in his volume, "Christ's Second Coming; will it be

Pre-Millennial?" Dr. Tregelles, Mr. Molyneux, and Mr. B. W. Newton, have also severally rendered good service to the cause of Christian truth by their effectual exposure of this error. But to my own mind any elaborate answer is unnecessary, to the notion that all the Old Testament saints will be excluded for ever from the Church of Christ, just as believers will be who shall live in the Millennial period of the earth. There are two texts of Scripture, which, if they stood alone, would, in my apprehension, settle the point at once and for ever. And these two texts consist of the words of our Lord: "Many," said Christ, on a well-known occasion, "shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." And in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, the former saw the latter in Abraham's bosom after being, as we are told by our Saviour, carried thither by the angels. With any one who is conversant with these two passages of Scripture, and yet could hold the opinion that Old Testament saints will form no part of Christ's glorified Church, but have

some inferior place assigned them, I should think that I committed a great mistake were I to enter into any argument on the subject.

As respects the nature of the Millennial dispensation spiritually, there exist equally marked differences of opinion among believers in the personal reign of Christ. Mr. Molyneux believes that the Millennial will be a probationary state, like the present. Mr. Birks zealously maintains that it will not, any more than heaven will be a state of pro-He holds that contemporaneously with the Millennial coming of Christ, everything in the shape of a probationary kind ceases for ever. In various parts of his Millenarian writings, he expresses the same sentiment in another form. He says that on the advent of Christ, the dispensation of grace will come to an end. Mr. Birks has, at least, the merit of consistency here. I have before shown that he denies there will exist any longer those religious ordinances, such as baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are essential characteristics of the gospel dispensation. With a courage in the expression of his

opinions, which all Millenarians do not show when their views are of a strikingly startling kind, Mr. Birks, following the Rev. Mr. Burgh, who had gone before him, repudiates the idea that the Word of God will be read in the Millennium, or be in anyway a part of the Millennial religion. He says, that so far from being then in use, the Scriptures will only "be preserved as a memorial" of the present dispensation, just as a pot of manna was laid up in the ark, after the Israelites had reached the land of Canaan, as a memorial of God's merciful and miraculous dealings with them in the wilderness. The late Mr. Bickersteth shared the views of Mr. Birks on this point, as, indeed, he did on most of the multifarious phases of the Millennial question. Dr. M'Neile entertains the same opinion. The late Rev. Mr. Maitland, of Brighton, whose Millenarianism was of a very decided kind, firmly maintained that the Millennial dispensation will be probationary, or one of grace. The Rev. H. A. Gilbert, Rector of Clare Portion, near Tiverton, who has written much on Millenarian topics, takes the same view as Mr. Maitland. So do Dr. Tregelles,

Mr. B. W. Newton, the Rev. John Cox, and, indeed, I believe a large majority of Millenarians. I should have thought that the point did not admit of two opinions. I should have supposed that the perpetuity of the Bible as a book to be read and acted on, would have been placed beyond the confines of controversy, by a single scriptural expression employed by Peter, namely, "The Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." But it has been reserved for a certain number of modern Millenarians to discover that we shall have nothing whatever to do with the Word of God in the Millennial state. What other startling discoveries remain to be made by Millenarians, time only can tell.

In relation to the state of things which is to occur in the interval between the commencement and the close of the Millennium, there seems to be no end to the diversity of opinion which prevails among Millenarians. Dr. Tregelles and Mr. B. W. Newton—for they uniformly go together in their views in relation to points connected with the personal reign of Christ—believe that there will

be a broad line of demarcation between Jews and Gentiles, both in relation to their position on the Millennial earth, and the mode in which they will externally and publicly worship God. In that belief they are joined with many other Millenarians. Mr. Molyneux goes a step further, and assuredly it is a long step. He maintains that there will be an eternal separation between Jew and Gentile,—the term Gentile embracing the professedly Christian world as well as the heathen. I had hitherto always supposed that the expression of Paul-"For we are all," both Jew and Gentile, "one in Christ"-would have rendered it impossible for any intelligent person to have adopted any such opinion as the one to which I have been adverting. If it be true, then in the eternal world there will exist a state of things which does not exist here; for here the middle wall of partition is broken down. Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Galatians, that in Christ Jesus there is neither Jew nor Greek, the latter word meaning Gentiles, but in the world to come there are to be Jews and Gentiles, and the separation is to be eternal. This may be

Millennial theology, but assuredly it is not the theology of the New Testament.

In connection with the approaching close of the Millennial dispensation, there occurs the question, Who are to constitute the legions whom Satan is to lead against the saints in Jerusalem in the great battle of Gog and Magog? On this point no inconsiderable diversity of opinion exists among Millenarians. The opinion of Dr. Gill was that they would consist partly of men and of fallen angels, the latter having bodies given them for the purpose. The Rev. Samuel Garratt, in his latest work, advances a hypothesis on the subject which I think is peculiar to himself among modern Millenarians. He maintains-or, perhaps, I should rather say supposes—that the Satanic army which is to fight with the saints in Jerusalem, in the battle of Gog and Magog, will consist of the heathen raised from the dead for the purpose. The same view was held by the Rev. Joseph Perry, upwards of a century ago, as will be seen by consulting his work already mentioned, entitled the "Glory of Christ's Visible

Kingdom in this World." The Rev. Joseph Burchell, to whose decidedly Millenarian work I have also before referred, is of opinion that the army of Gog and Magog will consist of evil spirits in material bodies. Dr. David Brown believes that Mr. Burchell was the first who advanced this theory, but the fact is not so. Dr. Gill first advanced the notion, and supported it with great zeal, upwards of a century before Mr. Burchell wrote on Millennial matters.

We now come to the close of the Millennial period of the world's history. And in relation to that event, there occurs anew the question of whether it is then or at the commencement of the Millennium that Christ is to give up his mediatorial kingdom to God, even the Father. The question has been partly anticipated in a previous chapter. I recur to it simply to say that on this point as on all the other points I have mentioned, there exists the same diversity of opinion among Millenarians. Were I to name those who take either side, I should have to run over a list of all the leading names within the Millenarian circle.

On the subject of the eternal state of believers, there is a very great variety of sentiment among Millenarians. A majority of them, I believe, share the conviction prevalent among anti-Millenarians, that the redeemed will be for ever with God, and Christ, and holy angels, in that heaven where God, and Christ, and holy angels now are, and which is popularly believed to be in celestial regions "far, far away" above the world which we inhabit. Many of their number, however, entertain the conviction that this world, in its regenerated state, will be the eternal abode of the glorified Church of Christ, and by consequence of Christ Himself; for the Church is then to be openly avowed by our Lord before the whole universe as his Bride, from whom He will never be separated—not even for a single moment. In plainer language, this world is to be the eternal heaven of all the ransomed people of God. I know of no one who has done more to spread this notion among Millenarians than Dr. Cumming. The belief is one which is making rapid progress. I regard it as destitute of foundation in the Scriptures;

but as I have gone fully into the subject in my work, "Our Heavenly Home," I will not again go over the same ground. Other Millenarians, with some of whom I am on terms of personal intimacy, entertain substantially the notion I have stated, but with this difference—that instead of all distinction of races or classes of men being then extinguished, the Jews will continue through all eternity, instead of only for the thousand Millennial years, to occupy higher portions in the future state than those belonging to Gentile nations. Human nature will continue, according to the Millenarians to whom I allude, to be the same through all eternity as it now is, with the exception that it will be sinless then, instead of sinful as now. One Millennial author of reputation who has most boldly come out as an advocate of this hypothesis, is Mr. Birks. In his work, "The Outlines of Unfulfilled Prophecy," already mentioned on several occasions, that gentleman, after quoting various portions of Scripture in proof of several other Millenarian ideas, thus expresses himself:-"In some of these passages, we have mention of

thousands of generations—in others of perpetual generations during which the race of man is to be continued upon earth. In others, the continuance of the earth itself is announced, as the destined scene of human habitation. In others, the series of generations is taken as the equivalent of a coming eternity. In others, the promises to Israel of earthly blessedness, and continual increase, are said to be everlasting. In all, there is the entire absence of any hint that the race of man is suddenly to close for ever, or that promises, which bear eternity stamped upon them, are to be restricted within the range of thirty generations. Words could scarcely be found more plain and expressive than are used in several prophecies to announce a perpetual series of human generations upon earth."

I have put in italics some of the sentences in this citation from Mr. Birks' book, in order that it may be seen more clearly how plain and emphatic his teachings are on the point. To the objection urged against this theory by the Rev. Dr. David Brown and others, that it involves "the eternal continu-

ance of sin and its inseparable concomitants," Mr. Birks replies, that the endless generations of mankind which will be born. after the Millennium, on the renovated earth, will be born sinless, and live through all eternity in a state of perfect purity. "The reply." he says, "to this difficulty"—the difficulty I have just stated-"is very simple. The grace of God, which will abolish sin for ever in the children of the resurrection, and swallow up death in victory, must be able to sanctify the infants of a fallen race from their very birth, so that their whole life may be one continual and unbroken progress in the love of God their Saviour. Their whole spirit, soul, and body may thus be upheld in blameless purity by the mighty and victorious power of the indwelling Spirit of God. To treat this as a thing impossible in its own nature is simply Manichean unbelief, and would imply that evil must be eternally more powerful than the redeeming grace of God."

Who could believe it possible, if the fact were not placed so plainly before us, that a man of great gifts, and, let me add, of great

grace as well-one, too, who possesses a thorough acquaintance with the Word of God -could ever have deliberately advanced so astounding a theory as this? Two or three plain sentences will suffice to crush it for ever. Mr. Birks, first of all, let meesay, is not, viewing the matter in a merely logical aspect, justified in urging as an argument in its favour, that God, being omnipotent, could create and preserve without sin an endless series of human generations after the Millennial era has come to a close. The question is not what God can do, but what the revelation of his mind and will which He has given us, authorizes us to believe He will do. As the Almighty, He can, of course, do anything not morally wrong. To Him, nothing is too hard; with Him, nothing is impossible. But that God will not do what Mr. Birks believes in this matter He will do, is placed beyond all question by one consideration. If men are to be born in perfect innocence, and are to live eternally in a state of complete sinlessness, then they can have no personal interest in the atoning or mediatorial work of Christ. It was for sinners

only that He died, and, therefore, they being sinless, will have no need of, and cannot be in any way interested in, the expiatory death which He died on the cross. They will be precisely in the same position as Adam was while he remained in a state of entire innocence. They will, consequently, never be able to speak of Christ as their Saviour, nor can their voices be ever heard joining in the grand chorus with the mighty swell of which heaven's arches will be eternally vocal, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." They will have no sins from which to be washed; no guilt which will need atonement, and, therefore, they must remain silent, while all the blood-bought, blood-washed, and glorified Church of God unceasingly sing in rapturous strains of the riches of redeeming grace.

The above are some of very many instances of the great diversity of sentiment which exists among Millenarians. I could have filled at least another hundred pages, if I had gone on

quoting as I might have done other cases of a similar kind, with the reasons which each Millenarian author assigns for his faith in his peculiar views. But I feel I have done enough in this way. The strangest part of the matter is, that each speaks with as much confidence in the soundness of his special views as if he had had an express revelation from above in relation to them. Indeed it scarcely ever occurs to any Millenarian to have the slightest misgiving as to the thoroughly scriptural character of his views. Every one seems to have received a Millenarian gospel of his own direct from heaven. It is right I should here remark that in the quotations I have made in this chapter from the writings of Millenarians, I have confined myself to authors, not only of established reputation, but who, having in every instance, a greater or less number of followers that shared their sentiments, might be regarded as representative men. If I had seen fit to give quotations from the writings of Millenarian authors but little known, my readers would have been startled by the extraordinary nature of their theories. Those who

may be curious on this point, I would recommend to consult the pages of the "Quarterly Journal of Prophecy" and those of the "Rainbow," and I promise them that their faculty of wonder, mingled with sadness, will find ample room for exercise.

If I had entered—as I did intend to enter before I found that my space would not permit my doing so-into an enumeration of instances in which Millenarians are not only at variance with one another, but with themselves individually, I should have made my book inconveniently large. I had marked a multitude of quotations for the purpose. But as my limits forbid my going into this phase of the question, I would recommend to the attention of my readers several small but very able publications on the subject written by Major Martin. The title of Major Martin's principal production is "Observations on Dr. Bonar's Prophetical Landmarks." Major Martin's publications may be had at Mr. James Darling's, Little Queen Street, Lincoln's-Inn Fields. Mr. Birks and two other Millenarian authors, are proved by Major Martin to have written a number of the most contradictory things which ever proceeded from human pen. Major Martin's small works are published at a price sufficiently moderate to place them within the reach of all who may wish to procure them. I content myself with saying that if my space had permitted, I should have amazed my readers by the number of flagrant contradictions of himself, which I should have brought forward in the case of nearly every Millenarian author of reputation.

It is due to myself to state, before I conclude this chapter, that so earnestly desirous have I been to ascertain as correctly as may be the views of our leading living Millenarians on the principal phases of the Millenarian question, that I gladly and gratefully availed myself of the offer of an able and zealous Millenarian friend, to get from about twenty of their number—mostly clergymen of the Church of England, and all eminent ministers of the gospel—answers to the following questions, bearing on the chief features of Millenarianism. The general heading of the questions was "On the Second Advent." It is right to state that

the authors, to whom the questions were put, were duly informed of the purpose for which the inquiries were made:—

First. Is it your opinion this is a personal reign? Where, and when?

Second. Do the prophets foretell this?

Third. What proofs from the apostles?

Fourth. At what period of time is "the restitution of all things"?

Fifth. Are there two judgments—a national and a personal?

Sixth. State your belief as to this.

Seventh. Do you understand the Prophet Ezekiel refers to the Millennial period for sacrificial ordinances?

Eighth. For what purpose?

Ninth. Do these verses—Isa. lxv. 17, and Isa. lxvi. 22—correspond with Rev. xxi. 1?

Tenth. And if so, at what period? Which belong to the Millennial, and which to the eternal?

Eleventh. Please give any other thoughts considered important in regard to the personal reign.

It is a remarkable fact, as proving the

extent to which diversity of opinion prevails among Millenarians, even in relation to the principal features of their system, that no two series of answers accord on all points. This fact is in keeping with what I stated in my second volume in relation to a communication which I received from the Rev. W. R. Fremantle, Rector of Claydon, Buckinghamshire, and President of the Prophecy Investigation Society. Mr. Fremantle, in that communication, frankly made the admission that in all probability not ten students of prophecy could be found who agreed in their interpretation of the twentieth chapter of Revelation. The admission, coming from one of our ablest Millenarians, is as important as it is candid, when it is remembered that the students of prophecy in this country alone can be numbered by tens of thousands.

There is but one conclusion to which every intelligent and impartial reader can come from this glance at the endless diversity of views which prevail among Millenarians. That conclusion is that they are not in a position to condemn us, because we who are unable to perceive

the soundness of the Millenarian scheme, differ on some points among ourselves in our mode of opposition to them. We are justified in saying in relation to them, when they reproach us for our want of perfect unanimity and our not accepting Millenarianism, "Physician, heal thyself." Before you ask us to adopt your Millenarian creed, go and settle your own differences on the subject. Let us know, in your collective capacity, what your creed really is; for hitherto, with the exception of a few features of your system, there has not been even an approach to harmony of views among you. On no other scriptural subject, with which I am acquainted, is there so great a difference of sentiment among persons professing to hold the same principles, as on that of Millenarianism. Millenarians, therefore, are not in a position to reproach us anti-Millenarians for any slight variety of sentiment which we may exhibit in our opposition to their scheme; much less have they a right to call upon us to embrace their creed. They all declare that their system is clear as the noonday sun! Then how is it, we have a right to

ask, that there is so much diversity of sentiment among them? Most certainly we find a number of dark spots in the Millenarian sun. Sometimes, indeed, they are so numerous and dark that the sun is not discernible at all. What is stranger still, is that while there exists the extraordinary diversity of sentiment of which I have given the preceding specimens, among Millenarians, each one is as confident that his views are right as if the fact had been intimated to him, as before remarked, by special revelation from above. I am sure that every intelligent and impartial reader will concur with us when he comes to the close of this chapter, that we anti-Millenarians do not prefer any unreasonable request when we ask Millenarians to concede to us, that it is at least possible, after all, that they may be wrong and that we may be right.



CHAPTER XI.

RASH AND EXTRAVAGANT VIEWS OF MIL-LENARIANS—THEIR INTOLERANCE TO THOSE WHO DIFFER FROM THEM.

In the course of this and my previous volumes I have adverted to various instances in which extraordinary views have been, and still are, held by Millenarians of note. The alleged rapture of the saints, to which I have referred at considerable length in my first volume, is one of these. The idea is entertained by the Rev. Robert Govett, and others, that Antichrist will be Nero, raised from his grave three years and a half before the personal return of our Lord. The Louis Napoleonic theory, so zealously and confidently advocated by Mr. M. Baxter, and, assuming his information to be correct, by about forty other Millenarians,

mostly clergymen of the Church of England, and ministers of the gospel, is another notion which appears to me to be well nigh as extravagant, viewed in its assumed accompanying circumstances, as could well be conceived.

To these I have now to add another theory as to the identity of Antichrist. That theory has been brought under my notice by an eminent Millenarian, while these sheets are passing through the press. This strange hypothesis is, that Judas is the Antichrist predicted in the New Testament, as destined to come immediately before the close of this dispensation. He is to be raised from the dead three years and a half before the personal advent of our Lord. He is to lead the armies, who are to go up to Jerusalem, at the great battle of Armageddon, to fight against the saints in that city, and is then, after the brief reign of three years and a half-being the twelve hundred and sixty literal days of twenty-four hours each—to be destroyed with nearly all the hostile hosts under his leadership, at the personal appearance of Christ. I find that this theory has but few advocates, in private dis-

cussions among Millenarians. It has been discussed at the meetings of the Prophecy Investigation Society, consisting, as I have mentioned in my first volume, of fifty of the most eminent Millenarians of the present day, forty-two of whom are well-known clergymen of the Church of England. The only foundation, so far as I understand, on which this hypothesis respecting the identity of Antichrist rests is, the fact of our Lord having spoken of Judas as "the son of perdition," and that Paul, in his Second Epistle to the Thessalonians-which is assumed by Millenarians to be emphatically in favour of their views-speaks of Antichrist as not only the "man of sin," but "the son of perdition." I content myself with the simple statement of these various theories as to the identity of Antichrist without going into any arguments to show how utterly groundless they are.

One very prevalent opinion among Millenarians, which seems to me not only extraordinary, but dishonouring to God and to Christ, is that which takes the shape of an assertion, that prophetic Scripture makes no reference whatever to the interval which is to elapse between the destruction of Jerusalem and the return of Christ to our world, to set up his Millennial kingdom in it. I am sure that this notion, which is so firmly held by many Millenarians as to have become a sort of second gospel to them, will startle those of my readers to whom it is new. Those who have embraced it lay down the proposition in the broadest and most emphatic terms, that none of the inspired prophetic writers ever had for a moment in their eye a single event which has occurred or will occur, in the intervening period between the overwhelming calamities which befell the Jewish nation at the siege of Jerusalem, and the return of the Lord to rebuild the Holy City and restore the temple. The triumph of Christianity over Paganism in the Roman Empire, when, in the fourth century, Constantine embraced the religion of Jesus, is said by this class of Millenarians to be utterly ignored in the prophetic Scriptures. So too is the rise and progress of the Papacy, and all the persecutions to which the Church

of Christ has been subjected during that lengthened interval. No less so is the great event of the Reformation. And the same may be said of all our marvellous missionary and other efforts to extend Christianity throughout the world, -efforts which have been crowned with signal success. Neither will any other events of however vast importance, which may yet occur before the return of Christ to reign personally on earth, be included in the list of those things spoken of in the Word of God as destined to take place. In the interval between the two periods in question, all are utterly ignored. The prolonged interval, already embracing a period of nearly two thousand years, is a perfect blank in the prophecies of the Bible,—as much so, indeed, as if there had been no interval at all. Even if I had space to reply at length to this theory, I would not waste a word upon it. I hardly know in what terms to express my amazement and regret that there should be found intelligent and excellent men with whom it is an allimportant article in their Millennial creed. The Rev. Dr. Tregelles, the Rev. Dr. Leask,

Dr. Stevenson, Mr. Molyneux, Mr. B. W. Newton, Mr. Ogilvy, are among its warmest supporters. The class of Millenarians who hold this opinion are called Futurists, because they believe all the prophetic references in the Bible to things which are destined to occur, relate exclusively to the second personal coming of Christ, and to the events which are to follow.

The Rev. Dr. David Brown mentions an instance in the book, from his pen, from which I have already quoted more than once, that a Millenarian minister of the gospel said to him one day, that Christ, when He came again to establish his Millennial kingdom in our world, would be as visible to him personally as he (Dr. Brown) then was, Dr. Brown standing at the time close by his side, and engaged in conversation with him. In this case we have an illustration of the old adage, that the disciple sometimes exceeds his master. Dr. Brown's Millenarian friend would be proud to own himself a disciple of Joseph Mede, whom most people consider the father of modern Millenarians. Well, then, what did

Mede say on the subject of the visible manifestation of Christ in the Millennial state? "The presence of Christ," said that godly man, "in his kingdom, shall no doubt be glorious and manifest: yet I dare not so much as imagine (which some are said to have thought) that it should be a visible converse upon earth. For the kingdom of Christ ever hath been, and shall be, a kingdom whose throne and kingly residence are in heaven. There He was installed, when He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; and there, as in his proper temple, is continually to appear in the presence of his Father, to make intercession for us."

Bishop Newton, who was the most eminent of Mede's Millenarian successors, shared the opinion of the latter respecting the personal appearance of Christ in the Millennium. In his "Dissertations on Prophecy," Bishop Newton expresses his conviction, in opposition to the prevailing opinion of modern Millenarians, not only that the martyrs alone will rise from the dead at the personal coming of Christ to set up his Millenarian throne, but that Christ shall

not personally dwell on earth. Yet the very divine who thus repudiates one of the first principles of the Millenarian system is, strange to say, pointed to in tones of triumph as one who was an ornament of Millenarianism.

I believe that, forty years ago, there was no Millenarian who stood higher—probably none so high-in Millenarian circles, than the late Mr. William Cunninghame, of Lainshaw. Even now he is quoted as one of the most weighty of Millenarian authorities. That gentleman had a theory to which he was devotedly attached in life and in death. was that, after the atmosphere is destroyed at the commencement of the Millennium, there will be found in the earth men living in spiritual bodies, and men unchanged during the whole of the Millennial state. Yet after labouring hard to establish this theory, he was no less zealous in maintaining that a third, or intermediate class of men will be created in the Millennium, who shall be neither righteous nor wicked. A sufficient answer to this absurd idea would be this:-If neither righteous nor wicked, what then are they to be?

Yet those who seriously advocated these astounding theories were not only men of intelligence, and of judgment too, in relation to all other matters, but they were regarded by their contemporaries as men of decided mark.

Dr. Cumming has a theory of his own in connection with that phase of Millenarianism which relates to the great battle of Gog and Magog, which I regard as no less extraordinary than any of those extraordinary notions to which I have adverted. It is but due to the Doctor to permit him to state his own views in his own words. In his "Apocalyptic Sketches," which have had a very extensive circulation, he thus writes-"It may be my own delusion, but it does strike me that I have found the explanation of a universally perplexing point—a confessed difficulty. If there is to be a Millennium of a thousand years with Christ and his own people in the midst of the earth, how is it that when Satan shall be loosed, there shall be found a people in the four corners of the earth called Gog and Magog, who shall be gathered together in battle against the saints of God in the resurrection body? I will give what I think the probable solution. I suppose, then, that 'the rest of the dead,' that is, the unconverted, are raised from their graves just at the moment that the thousand years are completely closed, and that 'the rest of the dead,' raised in their bodies, are those enemies who make war with the saints in their resurrection bodies; the unjust shall arise as well as the just; the one shall have their bodies restored as well as the other; the imprimatur of eternity stamped upon the one, the imprimatur of eternity stamped upon the other. I suppose, and I believe, it is the true solution of the difficulty."

I cannot concur with Dr. Cumming in his concluding sentence, that the above is the true solution of the difficulty—a difficulty which has always sadly perplexed Millenarians. I agree with him when he says, in his opening sentence, "It may be my own delusion." I am persuaded it is a "delusion." I am sure he will acquit me of anything in the shape of disrespect when I say this. He places two alternatives before his readers—either that his theory is true, or that it is delusion. I am

constrained to accept the latter. The difficulty remains unsolved. Dr. Cumming's solution would involve other difficulties, which, in their turn, would be found equally insoluble. We are told that "the rest of the dead"—that is, the wicked-"lived not again until the thousand years were finished." In all other parts of Scripture where the resurrection of the unrighteous is spoken of, they are represented as rising to judgment; but here they are brought before us as enlisting in Satan's army, and going under his leadership to engage in battle with Christ and his saints in Jerusalem, -for which purpose, according to Dr. Cumming, bodies are to be given them. Now, as the unrighteous dead, at the coming of Christ, will be found in every part and corner of the world, it must take them a very considerable time to come to the battle-field at or contiguous to Jerusalem. Then they are to be there destroyed by fire, which is to come down from heaven for the purpose. As yet, it will be observed, they have not appeared before the great white throne at the awful assize of the world, and consequently, before they do, they must be

raised a second time from their graves. Now, this is the first occasion on which I have met with any Millenarian author who makes out that there will be two resurrections, and, consequently, two physical deaths of the wicked. Unquestionably, the Scriptures give no countenance to any such idea. Besides, is it probable that God would raise up the unrighteous from their graves to conspire against and engage in battle with Christ and his saints? Is it, let me further ask, at all probable that, having been deceived by Satan when in their former bodies, the wicked would be deceived by Him a second time. In addition to all this, Dr. Cumming says that the wicked so raised from their graves and going up to Jerusalem to fight against the Lord and his people "have the stamp of eternity marked upon them." But how will be reconcile this with the declaration that they are to be devoured with fire from heaven? Dr. Cumming's mode of accounting for the armies that are to go up to Jerusalem to the great battle of Gog and Magog is quite as fanciful, quite as extravagant, as that of Dr. Thomas Burnet. That visionary but

interesting author, having first established to his own satisfaction that at the end of the Millenium the world would be entirely destroyed by fire, and all the inhabitants with everything else burnt up, felt that the fact would be entirely subversive of his Millenarian hypothesis unless he could, some way or other, provide the necessary legions to constitute the Satanic army that was to fight against Christ and his saints in the battle of Gog and Magog. Seemingly driven to his wits' end as to how to get out of the difficulty, he resorted to the desperate expedient of assuming that the apostates and persecutors of which the Satanic hosts would consist, would be" generated from the mud or the slime of the new earth." Not less wild was Dr. Gill's theory on this subject. He believed and earnestly advocated the idea, that the Satanic hosts that were to engage in the battle of Gog and Magog were to be partly men, and partly devils, to the latter of whom God would give bodies for the purpose and the occasion. But as to what was to become of them afterwards Dr. Gill very prudently preserves an unbroken silence.

There is one expression in the twentieth chapter of Revelation which disposes at once and for ever of all such hypotheses as those of Dr. Burnet, Dr. Gill, and Dr. Cumming. The expression occurs in the eighth verse, "And shall [Satan] go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth." It is demonstrable from this that it is existing nations, not nations to be created, and nations, too, which are existing on the earth, not to be raised from their graves, that are to be the legions of the Prince of Darkness at the battle of Gog and Magog. This, I hold, is quite decisive on the point. It scatters "to the four quarters of the earth" all such theories as those to which I have been adverting.

There are other notions which contemporary Millenarians entertain which are as rash as they are extravagant. Some of them, indeed, I am compelled to say, are positively presumptuous. Mr. Baxter, for instance, not only assumes that the time, at least within a month, of our Lord's advent may be known, but that it is sinful not to believe that it may be so, and not to acquire the

knowledge. In his work entitled, "The Coming Battle," he expresses his views in the following very dogmatic terms:-"So narrow-minded are most persons, that instead of aspiring to stand upon the observatory of prophecy, and with the telescope of Revelation to gaze on the enchanting scenes of futurity, they commonly entertain the popular fallacy that it is impossible to discover the time when the Millennium, and the Day of Judgment, and the Second Coming of Christ will commence; and to this end they sometimes quote the passage in Mark xiii. 32, 'Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' It is manifest, however, that persons are quilty of the sin of unwarrantably adding to the words of God, who explain this text to prohibit the knowledge of the month, or year, or general season of Christ's advent, inasmuch as the passage only specifies 'the day and hour' to be unknown."

If this be so, then our Lord was in error when He said that no man, not even the angels

in heaven, knew the time of the final judgment. If the time of his coming personally to establish his Millennial kingdom on the earth be ascertainable, we have only to add a thousand years to that time to learn the precise period of Christ's coming to judge all mankind.

Mr. M. Baxter's three works on the Millennium abound with exceedingly rash views and statements; but it will be sufficient to give one more illustrative instance. With regard to the alleged details of Christ's Second Coming, Mr. Baxter thus writes in his "Coming Wonders":-" The Lord's Second Coming will not occupy merely a few hours in its accomplishment, as is popularly and ignorantly supposed, but will occupy about five years, commencing with his descent from the highest heavens into the aërial heavens near to the earth, and the instant resurrection of all deceased saints, and their removal with 144,000 watchful living Christians to meet him in the heavens: where they remain during that interval of about five years, and at the close of that interval all the Christians on earth who die

during those five years are raised up, and together with all surviving Christians are translated to heaven, and then forthwith in a few days Christ descends upon Mount Olivet with the whole of these resurrected and translated saints to destroy Antichrist, and usher in the Millennium. Thus Christ first descends into the aërial heavens, and remains there for about five years, and then completes his coming by descending upon the earth; and the whole of this transaction must be regarded, not as two comings, but as one single progressive coming, accompanied with two stages, in the resurrection and translation of his saints—one at its beginning, and another at its termination."

I am sure there will not be a reader of this work, whether Millenarian or otherwise, who will not feel grieved at seeing any ignorant and erring fellow-man thus undertaking to reveal the times and seasons connected with the coming of Christ, which, we are told by our Lord Himself, the Father hath put in his own power. In preceding parts of the same book it is distinctly and emphatically affirmed

that Louis Napoleon is Antichrist, and that next year he is to make a seven years' covenant with the Jews to restore them to Palestine, and to protect them there, which covenant he will break at the end of three years and a half, and then go up to Jerusalem to make war upon the saints; while in the thick of the battle Christ is personally to come down from heaven and destroy the Napoleonic Antichrist. Within seven years, according to Mr. Baxter, the Millennial reign of Christ will commence. While I cannot but deeply deplore the confidence-almost amounting to an assumed intimate acquaintance with the secret purposes of God-with which Mr. Baxter speaks of things of which even the angels know nothing, I could not reconcile it to my sense of justice to that gentleman, were I to omit mentioning the fact, that I know of no Millenarian author who mingles more solemn or more powerful appeals to the consciences of the unconverted, than he does in his various Millenarian works. What a pity that he should be a Millenarian of the most visionary school.

But lamentable as are the lengths to which Mr. Baxter goes in his assumed knowledge of those secret things which belong to God alone, Captain Barker, another extreme Millenarian, goes still further. In his work, the "Day and the Hour; or Notes on Prophecy," published last year, and which, like Mr. Baxter's, is written on the Napoleonic hypothesis—that is, that Louis Napoleon is Antichrist-Captain Barker broadly and boldly affirms that Louis Napoleon is to sign a covenant with the Jews on the 27th October, 1871 -that the first resurrection will take place or the 6th December, 1874—that the translation of the saints will occur at one o'clock in the afternoon on the 25th January, 1875—and that Christ will descend on Mount Olivet while the sun is setting on the 20th September, 1878. Of course, the latter event is to be forthwith followed by the erection of Christ's Millennial throne in Jerusalem, and the establishment of his Millennial reign over all the earth. Captain Barker arrives at these results by a course of elaborate decimal calculations. Captain Barker, whom I regard as

a disciple of Mr. Baxter, goes, as will be seen, considerably beyond his master.

It is impossible to calculate the amount of mischief which is done to the cause of our common Christianity by such fearful presumption as is involved in the mode adopted by Mr. Baxter, Captain Barker, and others, in dealing with Millennial questions. As there is every probability of circumstances occurring within a year or two to subvert their theory, no right-minded believer in Christ can help deploring that it ever was advanced, while he anticipates the injury which will be done to the cause of evangelical religion by the utter failure, and the world-wide knowledge of the fact, of such predictions as those to which I have been adverting. It is absolutely distressing to see it so confidently asserted that Louis Napoleon is Antichrist, and is to enter into a seven years' covenant with the Jews, break the covenant in three years and a half, go up to Jerusalem to accomplish their destruction, and then be himself destroyed by the personal advent of our Lord.

I may here mention that I cannot help,

while reflecting on the above and other equally presumptuous predictions of Captain Barker, remembering the words of Milton, which I quote with one alteration—namely, that men "rush in where angels fear to tread." There is not an angel in heaven—no, nor the highest archangel there; that would presume to express himself as Captain Barker has done.

There is another kind of Millenarian extravagance which is also calculated to do much harm. In the number of the "Rainbow" for August last, there is a communication from the Rev. S. A. Freeman, author of "Israel's Return," in which he actually presses astrology into the service of Millenarianism. Mr. Freeman commences his communication in this wise:-"It is possible that the science of astrology may by many of your readers be ignored, and yet there may be some truth in it, and amidst much chaff a few grains of wheat worth preserving. I forward the following astrological period from Zadkiel, 1861, pointing to the year 1867 as eventful, and which not a few eminent interpreters of prophecy have considered would be so. And although such 'interpreters'—that is Irving, Cumming, and others—are by Zadkiel, in a former part of the article from which the extract is taken, called 'a foolish brood,' he yet associates himself with them, and, in his way, seeks to establish the truth of their interpretations."

Of course, I cannot deal with matter of this kind. Is it not deplorable that men of intelligence, and ministers of the gospel, should be found, who, in their zeal to support a favourite system, could deliberately print and publish anything so thoroughly wild as this? I wonder how it ever found a place in the "Rainbow." I am sure it must have got into its pages without having been seen by Dr. Leask.

A most painful instance of Millenarian extravagance, mingled with something more than I should like to characterize, occurred in August last, in an address delivered in the presence of from two thousand to three thousand people, at a meeting on the grounds of Mr. Macdougal Grant, of Ardilly, on the banks of the Spey. I think it is better not to name the speaker on the occasion. It may suffice to say that he is a gentleman of educa-

tion and high social position. Finding that the people of Scotland had no sympathy with his ultra-Millenarian notions, he broke out with great vehemence in the following strain:
—"Thanks be to God, I never will be judged, nor any Christian here. And then comes the Millennium. I am told there are many Christians in Scotland who do not believe in a Millennium at all. My God! do you believe in the Almighty?"

Who can read this without a shudder? Here the evidence of the truth of Millenarianism is pronounced, by implication, to be as clear and conclusive as that of the existence of God Himself. And yet this was spoken in the presence of the Earl of Kintore, the Earl of Cavan, Mr. Brownlow North, some professors of divinity in the Free Church of Scotland, without one single word being uttered in condemnation of such language.

No one can have read Millenarian works, or mingled much in Millenarian society, without having observed that with Millenarian notions there is always associated a greater or less measure of intolerance towards those

who differ from them. Where an ultra-Millenarianism exists, there will be found a corresponding degree of intolerance or uncharitableness towards those who cannot see the personal reign of Christ as they do. In Paris there is a monthly periodical called "The Watchman," chiefly devoted to prophetic subjects,-in a back number of which we find the following illustration of intolerance, mingled with bigotry, on the part of the Parisian Millenarians:-"What is very remarkable in the history of this little body, consisting of about a hundred persons, is, that they have received and cherished from their ancestors an indubitable persuasion of Christ's second coming to establish his personal reign upon the earth. And so evidently do they hold this doctrine to be revealed in the Scriptures, that when they heard of the gospel being preached by a valuable and faithful Swiss minister, now in Paris, they declined to hear him preach, because they were informed he did not believe in the visible and personal reign of Christ upon the earth. The argument was, that if he knew the gospel at all, he should not have been left in

ignorance of that great truth so clearly revealed in it."

It has of late become almost universally an essential article in the Millenarian creed. that though anti-Millenarians will be-some of them only say may be—saved, the salvation of those who believe in, and are earnestly and constantly looking for, the personal coming of Christ to establish his Millennial reign on earth, will be incomparably more glorious than the salvation of those who do not entertain Millenarian principles. They assign us a place among the foolish virgins, while they regard themselves as belonging to the class represented by the wise virgins. Formerly no Millenarian of note ever viewed the foolish virgins in any other light than as false professors, while the wise virgins were regarded as real believers,—the subjects of God's grace. This was the view taken of the parable by Dr. Gill, Benjamin Keach, and Augustus Toplady—three of the most eminent Millenarians whom the last century produced. now there is a complete uniformity of belief among Millenarians, that the foolish virgins

were believers in Christ as well as the wise ones,—only that they were not Millenarians, as the wise virgins were. While Millenarians who are waiting and longing for the return of their Lord are to be raised to the very highest position of honour and bliss in the celestial state, we anti-Millenarians are to occupy the very lowest places in heaven. Some Millenarians indeed go so far as to say, that while they will be in the innermost courts of heaven, we shall be in outer courts. They are to be in the presence-chamber of the King-we in an ante-chamber. I had always thought, and until I became acquainted with Millenarianism, imagined, with every other Christian believer, that an appropriating faith in Christ was to be the great turning point in all matters pertaining to our future destiny; but if Millenarians are right, I, and those who have shared my opinions, have been all in grievous Millenarians are to be the burning and shining lights in glory; those who are not Millenarians will be not only stars of an immeasurably smaller size, but so very small, and their light so faint, as that they shall be

scarcely perceptible amidst the resplendent blaze of Millenarian planets. I had also imagined that those whose sins are forgiven by God were fully as well as freely forgiven; but this, according to modern Millenarian theology, was a mistake. The sin of not having embraced Millenarianism will be remembered against the believer when he has passed through the dark valley and shadow of death, and stands before his Judge to render his account. Nay, more. If he is to be for ever in a lower place in glory than Millenarians, it will be remembered against him through all eternity.

CHAPTER XII.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS .- THE CONCLUSION.

Before stating, in accordance with the promise which I made in the preface to my first volume, what are the views I entertain respecting the meaning of the phrase, "The End of All Things," which I have chosen for the title of my work, and which was employed by the Apostle Peter,—it may be well to make one or two general observations.

The most common argument which I find employed in opposition to anti-Millenarian views is, that we are told there is to be a great apostacy immediately before the coming of Christ, which, Millenarians maintain, could not be the case, if the Millennium is to precede His advent. The Rev. S. Garratt, in his "Commentary on the Revelation of John,"

uses this argument in replying to a part of the preface to my first volume. The reverend gentleman first quotes the following passage from that volume, and then gives what he regards as an answer to it:-"I feel a perfect conviction, and rejoice in it, that there will be a period of future spiritual glory in the Church of God on earth, which will well deserve the name of Millennial. I believe that, through the spread of the gospel in the world, and the practical adoption of its principles, the time will come when the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, and that the holy principles of Christ's holy religion will acquire such an ascendancy in men's hearts, and exercise so great and salutary an influence on their lives, as that Christianity will cover the earth as the waters cover the channel of the great deep."

In reply to these views of mine, Mr. Garratt says:—"Then what has become of the tares which were to 'grow' till the harvest; of the 'evil men and seducers' who were to wax worse and worse; of the scoffers of the 'last days'?" This I hold to be no answer at all.

I fully believe that there will be a great apostacy immediately before the coming of Christ to judge the world. How often do we witness cases of apostacy in our own day? Does not the history of the Church abound with instances of entire Christian communities having apostatized from their first faith, and from the holy walk and conversation which had characterized their discipleship to Jesus? Have we not, to mention no other, a sad exemplification of apostacy in the case of most of the seven churches mentioned in the third chapter of Revelation? Why, then, should it seem strange, that at the end of that Millennium in which I believe, there should be a great apostacy, and thus the scriptural condition preliminary to Christ's coming personally to judge the whole world, be fulfilled? In fact, a fearful apostacy, such as is predicted before the advent of our Lord, is a much more likely occurrence, according to our views, than according to those of our Millenarian friends. A Millennium in which Christ is to reign personally in transcendent glory, and during which He is to administer the affairs of the

whole world, might be much rather expected to prevent a universal apostacy, or indeed any apostacy at all, than the Millennium which we expect to take place, which is without the personal presence or manifested glory of Christ. This, I maintain, is a conclusive reply to Mr. Garratt. But there is another and shorter. The Millenarian system necessarily involves two great apostacies. They contend that there is to be one before the personal coming of Christ to establish his Millennial kingdom. Then we know, and they equally admit with us, that there will be a second apostacy, as great as the first—if not, indeed, greater-at the end of their Millennium. Now, where, I ask, is there any passage in Scripture which gives the slightest countenance to the idea, that there will be two great universal apostacies immediately before the personal coming of Christ? Only one such apostacy is spoken of in the Word of God, and it is to take place, not at the commencement of the Millennium, but at its close, immediately before the coming of our Lord to judge the world.

I may here mention that, in replying to another part of my first volume, Mr. Garratt represents me as having written a chapter against "The Literal Interpretation of Scripture." I am sure Mr. Garratt would not consciously leave on the minds of his readers a wrong impression as to the views of an opponent; yet such would be the effect in the case in question. So far from writing against the literal interpretation of Scripture, I stated again and again, in terms the most explicit and most emphatic, in the chapter to which Mr. Garratt alludes, that I received the great part of the Bible in its literal sense, and only sought to prove, in opposition to the views of Mr. Molyneux and other extreme Millenarians,—that the Scriptures could not be uniformly construed according to their literal sense. I noticed the injustice which Mr. Garratt has thus unintentionally done me, in the third edition of my first volume; but as many readers of this volume may not have seen that edition, I have thought it right to allude to the matter here.

In conclusion, let me just say that my

views as to what constitutes "The End of All Things" are these: - After a spiritual Millennium, arising out of the prevalence of gospel principles, habitually reigning in the hearts, and regulating the lives of the great majority of mankind, and lasting for a longer or shorter period, Christ will come in great glory to our earth to judge the quick and the dead. The heavens and the earth will then be enveloped in one terrible universal conflagration which shall utterly consume all things. Contemporaneously with the conclusion of the transactions at the universal judgment, Christ will consign the wicked to eternal perdition, receive the righteous to be for ever with Himself in glory, and then deliver up his mediatorial kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

Having thus closed my series of volumes on a subject on which there exists so much diversity of opinion among the excellent of the earth, what could be more fitting than to conclude with the following prayer of the pious Bishop Hall, offered up to Christ two centuries and a half ago:—"O blessed

Saviour, what strange varieties of conceits do I find concerning thy thousand years' reign. What riddles are in that prophecy, which no human tongue can read! Where to fix the beginning of that marvellous Millennium and where the end, and what manner of reign it shall be, whether temporal or spiritual, on earth or in heaven, undergoes as many constructions as there are pens that have undertaken it; and yet, when all is done, I see Thine apostle speaks only of the souls of thy martyrs reigning so long with Thee; not of thy reigning so long on earth with them! How busy are the tongues of men, how are their brains taken up with the undeterminable construction of this enigmatical truth; when, in the meantime, the care of thy spiritual reign in their hearts is neglected! O my Saviour, while others weary themselves with the discussion of thy personal reign here upon earth for a thousand years, let it be the whole bent and study of my soul to make sure of my personal reign with Thee in heaven through all eternity."

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than that, excited the question directly, 'What more did you get?' 'I was deeply interested in the book,' she said; 'but for all I am an old woman, eighty-four, and have been what the world calls decidedly pious for many years, and I really do hope honestly seeking Jesus, yet I could never look up to God, and say, My Father! I often wondered would God let me die in this state; and many, many prayers have I put up to God about this very thing. But one day, while I was reading this book, I came to the words, "My Heavenly Father"; and as I read them a light seemed to dart into my mind, and with it such a lovely, such a beautiful feeling; it seemed to say, I am your Father—your Heavenly Father. I put down the book. I fell upon my knees; I felt as if I could weep my life away for joy and gladness, and all I could say over and over again was, My Heavenly Father—my own dear Father.'"

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—that life which manifests itself in all the fruits of the Spirit and close walk with God. The spirit which pervades the whole book from page to page is that of faithfulness and perfection—of one himself deeply imbued with the truth, and in carnest that his fellow-Christians may also fully realize and enjoy their 'high calling of God in Christ Jesus.' More profitable reflections on the several topics of the volume we have not read; and while they are both salutary and searching, they are in the highest degree consolatory, exhibiting as they do the amplitude and fulness of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty

might become rich."-Edinburgh Witness.

"This volume is published anonymously; but we believe we are correct in attributing the authorship to the editor of a first-class daily newspaper. That he should find time to issue volume after volume—the present is the seventh within a few years—of Theological Treatises, is, it must be acknowledged, very rare indeed. The present work consists of twelve chapters, which treat of Man's Ruined Condition by Nature—Salvation by Grace alone—The Means of Grace in Conversion—Divine Grace in the Final Perseverance of the Saints—Restraining Grace—Restoring Grace—Growth in Grace—Divine Grace in the believer's Death—and The Consummation of Grace in Glory. We have pleasure in calling the attention of his own countrymen in Scotland to the present work, and to the series, which has the savour of the old theology so presented 'that he who runs may read.'"—Aberdeen Journal.

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The following letter relative to this Work, from the Rev. Aubres Charles Price, late Minister of the Lock Chapel, has just appeared in the Record:—

"Some little time ago you reviewed very favourably an excellent book entitled, 'Truths for the Day of Life and the Hour of Death,' written by the author of 'God is

LOVE, 'OUR HEAVENLY HOME,' etc., and published by Virtue Brothers, Paternoster Row. Considerably more than one half of the volume is devoted to the subject of the Assurance of Faith and How to Obtain it. It may interest you, and will encourage the author, to know that three cases have recently come under my notice in which the book has been made, by the Holy Spirit, the means of bringing peace and joy to the troubled conscience.

"One case is that of an old Indian officer, who for the last five years had been deeply convinced of sin, but unable to realize his interest in the atoning work of Christ. A friend gave him this book. He read and re-read it, and he is now rejoicing in an assured hope of heaven.

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"Surely, sir, it is matter for no little thankfulness that, in these days of trouble and rebuke and blasphemy, God has enabled one of his servants, amidst avocations of the most urgent and onerous nature, to write and publish book after book, full to overflowing with sound Gospel truth. The Church of Christ owes him a deep debt of gratifude, and ought to uphold him

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XI.

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XII.

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